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AN EDUCATED NATION

THE WORLD OF TO-DAY

Under the general editorship of

MR. VICTOR GOLLANCZ

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WORKING OUT THE FISHER ACT.
By Basil A. Yeaxlee.

THE WORLD OF TO-DAY

AN EDUCATED NATION

69618

BY

BASIL A. YEAXLEE

SECRETARY OF THE UNIVERSITIES COMMITTEE OF THE Y.M.C.A. JOINT HON. SECRETARY OF THE EDUCATIONAL SETTLEMENTS ASSOCIATION, MEMBER OF THE ADULT EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE MINISTRY OF RECONSTRUCTION

WITH A PREFACE BY

A. L. SMITH, M.A.

MASTER OF BALLIOL COLLEGE, OXFORD

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PREFACE

MR. BELLOC has defined a preface as praise of one's own book. This preface is frankly meant as praise of Mr. Yeaxlee's book. He, as the secretary of the Y.M.C.A. Universities Committee, deserves this for his share in the wonderful work done by the Y.M.C.A. during the war for the bodily welfare of the armies, for their recreation and comfort, and finally for their education. He was also a member of the Adult Education Committee who did much to give value to its report, and who here presents the essence of that report in a form more digestible than that of a Blue Book. But the book itself, *An Educated Nation*, can justly be praised as giving an excellent conspectus of the many movements now converging upon Adult Education, and as a picture at once vivid and lucid of the present situation. The book is in the best sense popular; that is, it puts main principles in concrete forms, and does not fail to see the wood for the trees. Though very definite in purpose, it shows all-round tolerance and can appreciate conflicting views. Hence it is an admirable introduction to the whole group of problems implied in the very term 'an educated nation.' Unless this term comes to have more reality than hitherto, it is mere self-delusion to suppose that democracy, whether in the political form of a Labour Government or in the form of 'democracy in industry,' can be anything but a colossal failure. There are some superior persons who in the popular always suspect the superficial; if they read this book, they will be relieved, or disappointed. It is true that the author sets out to answer just the questions that will occur to the man in the street, such as the following: How can

you educate adults? Can music, dancing, acting be made educational? Will not classes among manual workers only engender extreme views? How can such education preserve itself from becoming propaganda? Can the State be asked to aid partisan or sectarian teaching? What are we going to do with the 1,000,000 continuation scholars who will be the annual crop under the new Act? How are we to get over the gulf between what people want and what they need? Why have the best-laid schemes of culture so often failed? But the answers to such questions are shown to take us down to the very roots of the subject, as can be seen even from an outline of the main topics included in the book. It begins with a forcible summary of the new order of things which has been produced by the war. It thence deduces the vital need of education as meaning more than mere technical efficiency, and as, in fact, an art of life; and in dealing with adult life we must start with what it wants, not with what we think it ought to want. There follows a sketch of the nineteenth century experiments and their most recent analogues, a story full of surprises, of warnings, and withal of encouragement. Next is a clear account of the Acts of 1899, 1902, 1918, and a review, to be found nowhere else, of the manifold developments of the last two decades. The necessary share of voluntary efforts in Adult Education is made clear, and the relative functions of universities, local authorities, and the State. The final note is sounded in the last chapter, that all depends on how far we can carry on the spirit engendered during the war: 'it will be impossible to achieve the aim set before us by the Adult Education Committee, or even to hope that we may become an educated nation, unless there is a great calling forth of public spirit.' This chapter in particular, with its pointed allusions, may be commended to local authorities, Board of Education officials, university teachers, and working class organizations; in each of these categories are some whom the cap fits.

A. L. SMITH.

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AN EDUCATED NATION

CHAPTER I

ON LIVING IN A NEW WORLD

'He has changed his world.' The Eastern phrase is a striking substitute for our bald and blank statement that a man is dead. The finality of the fact is not made to suggest an end of all things. With a definite conclusion of one phase comes an intimation that another has been commenced.

Our world has been changed, and we are alive. Completely and definitely the old order has been done away. In almost everything we who have survived the war must needs begin again. But the point of supreme importance for us all is that we cannot build on the old lines, even if we would. We have as yet scarcely realized how new our world is. We forget that in five years we have seen changes greater than those which normally mark the passing of a generation or even of a century. A revolution has occurred, and it is of such a kind that no counter-revolution is possible. It is not so much reconstruction as creation that is demanded of us in these days.

This is not to deny the continuity of history or the value of experience. It is only to insist that on every hand we must recognize a real alteration, and not simply a modification, in the problems and conditions of our individual and social life. From which it follows that our approach to them must be as entirely fresh, and our methods of dealing with them as radically changed, as our world is proving to be. Very few illustrations will suffice.

We have been so busy in applying science to the

activities and consequences of war that we have not marked the extent and variety of the discoveries made in the course of our efforts. The development of aircraft and wireless telegraphy under the pressure of war are obvious instances. Improved processes in the working of iron and steel depend upon certain amalgams of which we knew nothing in 1914. Chemists have found out during the period of hostilities far more than the way to manufacture unexpectedly deadly poison gases. The more intense study of physics which in many cases sprang from semi-military purposes has resulted in staggering challenges to our conceptions of space itself. Faced by desperate and unexampled cases in field hospitals, surgeons have had to venture upon equally desperate and unexampled operations, or let men die before their eyes. The issue has been life for the patient and added power to the medical profession. Physicians, likewise, called upon to treat men whose whole mental and nervous system had been thrown into a chaos inducing physical helplessness, have come upon psychological laws that appear to make possible veritable miracles, as we used to consider them in the old days. Biologists have penetrated yet further than before into the secret of life, and are telling us that all the variety and immensity of human powers and activities may be traced to infinitesimal cells (still more remote from sight or touch than atoms or electrons) situated in three small glands of the body.

More within the ken of most of us than scientific researches is the extraordinary race contact produced by the war. Frenchmen perhaps we knew; Germans we might have met; Italians and Russians were possible acquaintances. But in France and Egypt, in Mesopotamia and East Africa, in Gallipoli and Flanders, there has been a medley of all the world's fighting men—and working men too, which may be more to the point—so that Europeans, Americans, Asiatics, Africans, and dwellers in the islands, great or small, of the Pacific, have fought or fraternized, until any soldier may count among his friends those who represent a score of different

nationalities, and exhibit as many varieties of speech and complexion. All the while there has been going on the effort to achieve an international and world-wide brotherhood of labour. Mutual knowledge and understanding may not yet have become very wide or very deep. But the first great step towards them has been taken in so far as a common humanity has been realized. Even where men of different nationalities have encountered each other only as members of opposing forces there has yet been some possibility of reciprocal respect. (Our British and Dominion troops in Gallipoli, for example, discovered unsuspected good qualities in the Turks against whom they fought so fiercely.) And if, in some cases, the contact between one nation and another, whether as foes or as allies, seems to have resulted chiefly in a kindling or a fanning of animosity and mistrust, the fact remains that they have met, and that a little knowledge may be a dangerous thing.

For ourselves, as Britishers, the increased intercourse between the various parts of the Empire is an experience that has changed the outlook, both at home and in the Dominions. For us all, as citizens of the world, the new experience of an international life, as distinguished from a mere sentiment or theory about internationalism, has brought a crystallizing element into our thought of the world.

Nor has this hindered the growth of nationalism. Rather has the instinct of peoples to assert their own self-consciousness, and the determination of nations, small or great, to work out their own destiny, been quickened. We used to regard India and Ireland, Poland and Serbia, Greece and the South African Republic, as the main seekers after national self-realization in the world. Now we do not recognize the map of Europe if it is coloured according to the nationalist claims and aspirations of the population. We are perplexed by liberated Palestine and taken aback by revolutionary Egypt. The student demonstrations in China shake us into an effort to discern the ideals of the new Far East. The problem of nationalism seems to

be identical in every part of the world so far as its main features go. The nearer to our own doors we come, the farther off is the promise of a true solution. Ireland is our British sphinx, with her fateful, ineluctable question.

As at home, so everywhere, the political and industrial situation had no parallel before the war. Neither the French Revolution nor the Industrial Revolution can give us guidance as to the causes of our present discontents or the remedies likely to prove effectual. Then the struggle was for freedom and a chance to live. Now it revolves about the use of that measure of freedom which has been won, the kind of life that is to be the goal of both the individual and society. Before the war, in practically all lands alike, certain forms of political and industrial organization were widely accepted, and the question at issue was that of their relationships. Now a growing body of people claims that these organizations must be scrapped. But we need light on the vital question of the types of organization by which they should be replaced.

So, again, in the economic life of the world, we are no longer face to face only with rival theories of wealth, production, and distribution. A world-wide poverty is upon us: the demand for increased production may or may not spring from the desires of the 'get rich quick,' but it assuredly does spring also from the needs of the starving and diseased children in Central Europe: distribution is no longer merely an interesting problem of organization or control; it is a life and death matter, alike for the peasant in the heart of Russia and for the artisan of Germany. When Lord Salisbury said, 'We are all Socialists now,' he was making a cynical reference to the facility with which vote-catching politicians of all parties incorporate a popular cry into their electioneering manifestos. The economic experiments made by our own and other Governments in recent years may be a compromise with socialism rather than a true expression of it. None the less, many things formerly left to private initiative have now been undertaken by the State, and

while about some of these ventures the whole nation is saying, 'Never again,' respecting others there is universal agreement that they must be maintained and even developed further.

Meanwhile the political and social combinations and cleavages which formerly marked our national life have given place to completely different ones. All the old parties have made progress, till those who once stood grimly on the right are where the centre used to be, the men of the centre occupy what before the war they thought a reprehensible left-wing ground, and the former Radicals have in turn become revolutionaries. Across these divisions come others, arising less from differences in political theory than from the pressure of economic conditions and sympathy with democratic aspirations. The middle and professional classes are not so conservatively inclined, now that they find themselves among 'the new poor.' Into the universities the returned soldiers have carried a wave of radicalism (not purely, or even mainly, political), and among their tutors they have found many who are far more concerned with the education and emancipation of the masses than with the polishing of culture for a few.

The extension of compulsory and systematic education for all to the age of sixteen, and presently eighteen, the setting free of school children from long hours of toil before or after the school day, and the shortening of the hours of employment for men and women, combine to create a new resource which is not without its perils; for leisure may make or mar a people, according as it is used or misused, and we are slow as a nation to grasp either the ideals or the methods of true education. Commerce and industry, home life and the corporate life of the nation, are deeply affected in a dozen ways by these far-reaching legislative achievements. For us in these islands such changes by themselves would make a new world, and we are not yet sure of the right way to live in it.

The first deduction from such a review of the situation is that the next few years must be for us all a time of adventure and of risk. The illustrations that we

have adduced surely show conclusively that we have not much to go upon in the way of experience as we confront these strange possibilities and uncharted perils. Familiar assumptions, whether in science, in politics, in economics, or in social life, can no longer be trusted. Even if principles stand, the circumstances to which they must be applied have never before been known in the peculiar combination now before us. Precedents count for nothing when the whole complex of aims and conditions is so novel. Even experiments of other days cannot be trusted to work out now as they did then.

One thing is clear. We cannot stand still. On the other hand, we neither desire nor dare to go back. Indeed, it would be impossible to do so. To temporize at a time like this is a criminal betrayal both of our contemporaries and of our successors. Even the man who feels the weight of his responsibility, and is eager to secure progress by means of devoted service to the common good, finds it difficult to discern or to assess all the factors with which we have to reckon. Investigators may assemble the facts of industry, of politics, of international relationships. The wisest heads and the most generous hearts may take counsel together as to what we ought to do. But when the hour for doing arrives, there will of necessity be much that is a venture of faith. Experiment, however well founded and cautiously conducted, is inevitable. It must be experiment on a large scale. Consequently it will involve great risks. It will demand all the courage, pertinacity, patience, and candour that we can summon to our aid.

To all this many people are not yet awakened. The sheer strangeness of the situation in detail captivates their attention. They are busy trying to make ends meet or endeavouring to pick up broken threads. They have not understood how new their world is, either in the circumstances that surround them or in the mental and moral attitude which they and their fellows unconsciously have assumed. Short as five years may be in comparison with a generation or a century, the very rush of things since 1914 has caused us rapidly to accept

as a matter of course a multitude of facts and feelings which we have not stopped to understand. If we make some sort of sense of newspaper references we are apt to imagine that we have grasped the philosophy of current history. Or again, everybody talks economics—the rate of wages, and whether the miners, the railwaymen, the busmen, or the shop-assistants ought to have an increase; the rise of prices, and how far this is due to profiteers; the cheapness nowadays of a continental holiday, and whether it will be possible to get as many francs to the pound by the time one's annual leave is due as can be got now; and so forth. Yet few people realize either that these are economic questions, or that really intelligent discussion of them is impossible without a grasp of the main principles of economics. So, too, psychology, metaphysics, and even theology, have an unrecognized place in the thinking and the conversation of those who talk with keen interest about spiritualism, the fate of the men who were killed during the war, and the possibility of communication with departed spirits, or even the relative value of the religions practised by Mohammedans, Buddhists, Hindus, and others whom they have come to know while on active service. But such people would have declared before the war that they 'had no use' for subjects like these. There is a danger as well as an advantage in the fact that so much popular discussion is afoot; for debate on a foundation of ignorance, unless it leads to the desire for fuller knowledge, is apt to issue in prejudice, distortion, and fatal misunderstanding.

Above all, it is to be remembered that those whose interest in the newness of things is probably keenest are those men who came back from the war expecting fulfilment of the promise that a new world should be waiting for them. They have found that, having fought for it, they now must create for themselves their ideal social and industrial order. National and international affairs, they are told, can be established on a nobler and more just basis only if they themselves take the business in hand. Some of them reply that things are in a far worse state than before, and turn in their

disappointment and disgust to a cynical pursuit of self-interest in business and pleasure. Others are braced by the challenge, but appalled by the task.

Another great company which is awakening to the newness of the world, and which will have much to do with the moulding of it, is that of the newly enfranchised —the millions who are the less negligible because each counts for one and none for more than one. If the men have been made more serious and purposeful, whether bitterly so or hopefully so, by the experiences of war-time, the women bring an even more distinctive contribution to the determination of the future. They are not simply so many additional units to be distributed among existing parties, and to lend to this official candidate or that their 'vote and interest.' They have their special instincts, the experience of motherhood, the love of order, beauty, and chivalry, the wisdom and the enthusiasm, the social conscience and the power of devoted service that they have had so long to exercise indirectly, but that are indispensable to the progress of nations and of the world.

A second and even greater deduction remains to be made. Ignorance is peculiarly dangerous in days like these; knowledge is correspondingly essential. Instinct may lead people to feel and act aright. But complete personality involves knowledge, as well as feeling and action. Grasp of fact, power of judgement, breadth of sympathy, depth of insight—all are implied in real knowledge. With a world so changed, facing such infinite possibilities of both good and evil, surrounded by clamant opportunities and lurking perils, we cannot afford to get less than the best out of either the individual or society. The men and women of to-day must be awakened to the newness of their world and enabled to deal with it wisely and courageously. Therefore we plead for an immediate and practical extension of adult education throughout the country. For, says Mr. H. A. L. Fisher, 'Education is the art of drawing out of a man all that is best and most useful in him, so that his powers may be employed with advantage to the com-

munity, and to himself as a member thereof.' Or again, in the words of the Master of Balliol: 'Now . . . we are taking Education in its true sense, and are beginning to see that all our present urgent problems come back to it as their basis and postulate.' [1]

CHAPTER II

EFFICIENCY OR ADEQUACY?

THERE is no doubt that the urgent national need of education is becoming more fully recognized. The very word is already tending to become a cant term. Great employers of labour on the one hand, and trade unions on the other, are talking about it and making provision for it. The newspapers give prominence to schemes and proposals emanating from all kinds of sources. The nation is seen to have a superhuman task ahead of it. Men and women, boys and girls, must be equipped with a thoroughness unknown before. We used to be told that Germany was constantly outstripping us because of her enterprise and our apathy in the matter of education. The case of the aniline dyes was constantly quoted. Now there is no need for comparisons. The danger against which we are warned is not that of losing markets: it is that of failing to regain even the safety line of solvency. Our national debt is more than a matter of book-keeping between ourselves and other nations, or between investors and those fellow-citizens to whom they have lent their money for purposes of trade and manufacture. It is the indication of a deficiency in *things*—as distinguished from money. This must be made good, unless the nation is to pass into the limbo tenanted by those which were once 'great powers,' but now are negligible in the affairs of the world. So the gospel of efficiency is preached as

[1] Letter to the Prime Minister: Final Report of the Ministry of Reconstruction Committee on Adult Education [Cmd. 321], H.M. Stationery Office, 1*s.* 9*d.* net.

the way of deliverance from the threats of this new and strange world.

To identify the idea of education with that of efficiency, however, is fatal. The demand for a great increase in technical training and a drastic improvement in the method of imparting it is indeed a welcome sign. There is, after all, some truth underlying the error of supposing that the sole object of education is efficiency. But it is a half truth. Education is the development of personality. Therefore it is a grave mistake to order your educational system in view of economic circumstances alone. The challenge of circumstances is then allowed to override the claims of personality. It is not safe to consider equipment apart from the man to whom the equipment is to be given. Yet it is easy to fall into the fallacy, because the argument appears so practical and so logical.

Take, for example, the statement that increased production is essential to the regaining of economic stability. This theory is so widely accepted that it is becoming a dogma amongst a very large number of people, though it is in itself debatable, and demands an educated mind for its due consideration. But, given that it is true, then, clearly, waste of material and of energy must be eliminated. Science must be brought into play. The collection and transport of raw material, the adaptation of manufacturing processes, the organization of the factory, the utilization of by-products, the capture of markets, and the sale and distribution of goods must all be carried on according to a plan which gets the utmost out of every scrap of material, every atom of machinery, and every individual among the personnel employed. Thus arises an enthusiasm for 'scientific management' of industry.' Scientific management applied to the strength and skill of the workers will seek a wise avoidance of strain, and a facilitation, based upon the study of the muscular and nervous system, of physical effort. But it not infrequently develops into an inhuman engine for making men and women into minute, though highly finished, cogs in the general machine. 'In England this

extreme has in comparatively few cases been reached: elsewhere it has resulted in such an elaboration of the division of labour that all a man is trained to do may be to turn a screw in a piece of mechanism as it passes him on an endless band. The men are highly trained, but their souls are killed. Even in our own country, however, there are developments not dissimilar, if not so extravagant. Technical education with nothing but mechanical efficiency in view may have sinister results. In the clerical and supervisory branches of industry and commerce the same fatal tendency emerges more clearly. Business efficiency is supposed to be produced by a curriculum of shorthand, book-keeping, a little accountancy, and a dash of commercial law, with possibly a modicum of desiccated economics and a smattering of 'commercial' French. It is not long since candidates for minor clerkships in the Civil Service had to devote more attention to 'tots' and 'indexing and docketing' than to any other subject. And, on the other hand, there is significance in the very phrase 'trade union education,' which is being used in some quarters, not as a reproach, but as an ideal.

To make a man a real master of his craft is to go a long way towards educating him. When he is conscious of his ability to make a worthy contribution to the business or industry in which he is engaged, his finer ambitions are awakened, and his social instincts, making for the service of the commonwealth, are developed. But getting the most out of a man is not the same thing as getting the best out of him, though the greater includes the less. Technical training may be an instrument, in varying degrees, of liberal culture.[1] Certainly no man who has been educated in any true sense can be content unless he knows as much about his daily task as possible, and can perform it in the best and most efficient fashion of which he is capable. Vocational education may be, and ought to be, a noble and inspiring process. A man who works in wood or metal may find kinship with half

[1] Cf. Final Report of the Committee on Adult Education, §§ 288–300.

the world if he learns whence and how his material came to him, what is the history of his craft, why the secret of beauty lies in the perfect fashioning of the humblest piece of work with a view to its complete fitness for its destined use, and how his own task touches and affects that of many other people in widely different spheres. The addition of such knowledge to a scientific training in the use of his materials and the handling of his tools will make him a valuable member of society, and not merely an indispensable unit of production.

This ideal, however, brings us to the true aim of education, which may be summed up, for want of a better word, in the term *adequacy*, as distinguished from and inclusive of simple efficiency.

Economics represent one phase of everyday human life, politics another. Industry is one form of human activity, as literature and the arts provide a different expression of it. None of these things have any real existence in abstraction from the individuals and the society that create them. Properly considered, no single aspect or product of human living is without practical relations to all the rest. The problems enumerated in the preceding chapter, and the many more of which they are typical, are problems of personality far more than of circumstance.

'The main purpose of education is to fit a man for life, and therefore in a civilized community to fit him for his place as a member of that community. . . .

'The essence of democracy being not passive but active participation by all in citizenship, education in a democratic country must aim at fitting each individual progressively not only for his personal, domestic, and vocational duties, but, above all, for those duties of citizenship for which these earlier stages are training grounds; that is, he must learn (*a*) what his nation is, and what it stands for in past history and literature, and what is its place among the other nations of the modern world; (*b*) what are his duties to it, from the elementary duties of sharing in its defence and submitting to its laws up to the

duty of helping to maintain and even to elevate its standards and ideals; (*c*) the economic, political, and international conditions on which his nation's efficiency and well-being depend; its relation to the other constituent parts of the Commonwealth of British nations called the Empire, and the degree to which it can now or in the future enter into closer relations with other civilized nations for the just treatment of less developed races, for the furtherance of international co-operation in science, medicine, law, commerce, arts, and for the increasing establishment of world-peace. . . .

'The economic recovery of the nation, the sound exercise of the new spirit of assertion among the rank and file, the proper use of their responsibilities by millions of new voters, all alike depend on there being a far wider body of intelligent public opinion after the war than there was before, and such a public opinion can only be created gradually by a long, thorough, universal process of education continued into and throughout the life of the adult.

'Such a progress needs to be planned out at once and set going immediately as part of the general work of reconstruction.'[1]

The fundamental question to which we as a people have to find an answer is not whether we can become efficient in face of the economic pressure that has followed upon a world war. It is whether we can attain to intellectual and moral as well as physical adequacy in face of a situation that demands the best from every one of us.

The conviction that this implies a wide and liberal education underlies the growing demand of democracy for the opportunity of humane studies, and the increasing insistence of influential manufacturers and men of commerce that these must be facilitated by the firms with which they are connected. The *Interim Report of the Adult Education Committee on Social and Industrial*

[1] Final Report, pp. 4, 5.

Conditions in Relation to Adult Education[1] gives proof upon proof that the demand is real and deep. On the other hand, we have the genuineness of the employers' enthusiasm for a real education of their work-people exemplified by what they are doing in sending some of their best employés, at the firms' expense, for six months or a year, to one or other of the non-vocational colleges for working people described in a subsequent chapter.

The pressure of practical needs is urgent enough. Production and reasonable speeding-up must be encouraged in every possible way. Efficiency is vital. But it would be disastrous to set aside all liberal education on that account as irrelevant idealism. Bolshevist Russia in one way, crippled and impotent Germany in another, are contemporary witnesses to the inevitable effects of leaving people without either technical or liberal education, or of advancing vocational at the expense of non-vocational training.

There are some who say that such a social system as we have now renders all real progress impossible; that the immediate task which demands all our energies, therefore, is to 'smash the system,' to effect an economic revolution (though not necessarily by physical force); and that until this is accomplished the work of education must be confined to the service of political and economic propaganda.

It is to be noted, by way of reply to such an argument, that when the Adult Education Committee addressed itself to its terms of reference, which directed it 'to consider the provision for, and possibilities of, adult education (other than technical or vocational) in Great Britain, and to make recommendations,' it saw clearly the barriers to adult education constituted by such conditions as bad housing, unduly long hours, heavy and degrading forms of labour, the shift-system, and lack of holidays. Consequently it drew up and presented, as its first activity (though strictly this lay outside its terms of reference), the far-reaching Interim Report on

[1] Cd. 9107, H.M. Stationery Office, 3*d*. net.

Industrial and Social Conditions in Relation to Adult Education. This document is presupposed in all that the committee's Final Report contains, and the one should never be read apart from the other.

Dealing with the critical nature of the industrial, social, and international questions awaiting solution, the Interim Report says:—

'It is not lack of goodwill that is to be feared. But goodwill without mental effort, without intelligent provision, is worse than ineffectual: it is a moral opiate. The real lack in our national history has been the lack of bold and clear thinking. We have been well-meaning, we have had good principles; where we have failed is in the courage and foresight to carry out our principles into our corporate life.'

'Whether or not,' says Lord Haldane, 'we can succeed in this country in gradually replacing the class consciousness of capital on the one side and of labour on the other by an untroubled sense of concentration on the service of the community as the paramount aim of industry, there is at least one thing that is obvious. The interpretation of the problem, and any effort that may be made to solve it, will require not only knowledge of a high order, but knowledge that is widely diffused. It is the want of this knowledge on both sides, and of the reflective habit of mind that it brings with it, that is largely the source of a sense of antagonism. . . . There is no reform that seems to me more urgently required from every point of view than a great diffusion of educational facilities among the people at large. Higher mental training can bring born leaders to the front. It raises the standards of those whom it moulds. It solves automatically our social problems.'[1]

Mr. J. M. Mactavish, secretary of the Workers'

[1] *Education and Democracy: an Address to the Co-operative Congress, 1920.* Co-operative Union, Hanover Street, Manchester, 3*d.* net.

Educational Association, has emphasized the same point: 'Although the industrial problem is economic, it is not primarily economic. It is primarily psychological—a problem of human conduct and behaviour.'[1]

If these things are true in the arena where the relationship of capital and labour—the most insistent question in every civilized country in the world to-day—is being worked out, they are equally true of every other great problem and task presented by this chaotic new world in which we find ourselves after the war.

CHAPTER III

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

THOUGH the phrase 'Adult Education' has of late become familiar, it still represents to the average man a contradiction in terms. Most people regard childhood and youth as the naturally ordained period for 'book-learning.' If a boy or a girl is among the fortunate few who go further and take a university or professional course, the termination of this is still too often looked upon as closing the educational chapter in their lives. 'When I left school': 'when I began life'—the suggestion is not that of milestones along the road of personal development, but rather that of a distinct and final passing out of one world into another, contrasted rather than connected with the first.

All this is as false to actual experience as it is to a real understanding of education. If we accept as true the description of a complete education quoted from the Adult Education Committee's Report in the preceding chapter, we must go on and admit, with all the emphasis which the committee strives to convey by its use of capital letters, that:—

'THE NECESSARY CONCLUSION IS THAT ADULT EDUCATION MUST NOT BE REGARDED AS A LUXURY FOR A FEW EXCEPTIONAL PERSONS HERE AND THERE,

[1] *Education in its Relation to Labour and Industry*

NOR AS A THING WHICH CONCERNS ONLY A SHORT SPAN OF EARLY MANHOOD, BUT THAT ADULT EDUCATION IS A PERMANENT NATIONAL NECESSITY, AN INSEPARABLE ASPECT OF CITIZENSHIP, AND THEREFORE SHOULD BE BOTH UNIVERSAL AND LIFELONG. . . .

'THE OPPORTUNITY FOR ADULT EDUCATION SHOULD BE SPREAD UNIFORMLY AND SYSTEMATICALLY OVER THE WHOLE COMMUNITY, AS A PRIMARY OBLIGATION ON THAT COMMUNITY IN ITS OWN INTEREST AND AS A CHIEF PART OF ITS DUTY TO ITS INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS, AND THEREFORE EVERY ENCOURAGEMENT AND ASSISTANCE SHOULD BE GIVEN TO VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS, SO THAT THEIR WORK, NOW NECESSARILY SPORADIC AND DISCONNECTED, MAY BE DEVELOPED AND FIND ITS PLACE IN THE NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM.'

Adult education from this point of view is in no sense an effort to overtake the deficiencies of elementary education, or to recompense a man for missing secondary school or university training. The most thorough adoption of the scheme for continuation schools at which boys and girls remain till they are eighteen will not remove the necessity for adult education. Indeed, the further we carry into effect Mr. Fisher's ideal of education for children and young persons, the better foundation we shall lay, and the larger demand we shall create, for education as a lifelong process.

Nor is it simply that the knowledge acquired in childhood and youth creates an Oliver Twist appetite for more. The essential factor lies in the reaction of adult experience upon mental processes, and upon facts acquired or theories presented. 'Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers,' if practical judgement and matured common sense are not developed and exercised. A practical education does not mean cramming a young student with rules, and filling his brain with bare facts and figures. It means the awakening of his powers of discernment, of reception or rejection, of decision and action, so that when he comes to manhood and takes up its tasks he can cope with situations as they arise because he is able to adjust himself to novel conditions and

activities. His mind is not made up beforehand, but he has a mind to make up, and has learned how to go about finding solutions for his problems and shaping means to ends. A really practical education must be both adult and liberal.

Let it not be supposed that this is a question of class. Every social grade in our present society has its preponderance of uneducated, partially educated, or badly educated people. The middle class is perhaps the worst of all, because those who come within it have at least had a good start at school and, in a number of cases, at college. They have had ample opportunity of perpetuating for themselves the educational process, but have in all too many instances refused or neglected to do so. When this happens, all their reading, whether of newspapers or of books, tends to buttress their preconceived ideas. The people whose company they seek and whose conversation they enjoy are those who share their own traditional point of view. Modification of their tenets seems to them a weakening of conviction; synthesis of ideas or aims with those of their opponents simply does not occur to them. But the necessity for adult education among the middle classes is being recognized by the younger generation itself. A well-known manufacturer in the North recently told the writer that a group comprising young workmen and young capitalists had lately come together for the discussion of industrial problems. The superiority of the workmen in their grasp of fact and breadth of view was very marked. Most, if not all of them, were members of tutorial classes organized by the W.E.A. The capitalists were deeply impressed by the contrast between themselves and their working class friends, and though they were all able men who had been at good schools, and in some cases at universities, they frankly admitted that if they were to make any adequate contribution to the solution of the problems under discussion, they, too, must commit themselves to the continuous education in which knowledge and experience are brought into harmony.

Were it not for the line so frequently taken by

unilluminated education authorities, and philanthropic bodies whose good intentions are only equalled by their bad psychology, it would be unnecessary to labour our next point. As things are, we have continually to proclaim that adult education demands conditions and methods differing widely in degree, if not in all respects in kind, from those of school and even of college. It is with post-graduate study that we are concerned, whether the graduation be from the halls of ancient learning or from the school of modern experience. Freedom is the keynote.

'In the development of working class education,' writes Mr. Mansbridge,[1] 'the scholar and administrator must sit side by side with the adult student, at the same table, in perfect freedom. The initiative must be with the students. They must say how, why, what, or when they wish to study. It is the business of their colleagues, the scholars and administrators, to help them to obtain the satisfaction of their desires. This means that scholar, administrator, and working man must act together, and fortunately there are, and have always been in England, many organizations of labour and scholarship in a mood to do so in their corporate capacity. . . .

'In actual practice [he is speaking of W.E.A. university tutorial classes] there is little clashing in a group of students, for the class is not intended for the passing of resolutions, but is rather a means whereby all relevant facts and arguments may be looked at and turned over. The opportunity, indeed the necessity, for action comes in some other place, when the class is over. Co-workers in a class may be furious antagonists in the forum, but the association makes possible enduring friendship arising out of mutual respect, and a perception that all sorts of ideas and types are necessary to make a world. The vital principle on which the movement depends is the full and free expression of the minds of working men and women, based on their own experience.'

[1] *An Adventure in Working Class Education*, pp. xviii, 54. Longmans, 6s. net.

That principle is of universal application, and finds its most fruitful expression when a group of students draws its members from widely-different classes, parties, and sects. We shall never be an educated people till, by means of such groups, we have taught each other all that each holds in trust for the rest. But it is as hard to get educationists *in practice* to concede that principle of freedom as it is to get politicians, sectaries, or certain types of both capitalists and labour men to do so. The more honour to those wise men of all sorts who made it possible to say truly of such classes as Mr. Mansbridge describes that in each there were 'thirty-one students and thirty-one tutors.'

The Committee on Adult Education makes its position on this point abundantly clear. It says :—

'Adult education will clearly thrive only under conditions which allow of the fullest self-determination on the part of the students as regards the studies to be pursued, the choice of the teacher, and the organization of the class. Our proposals, therefore, are framed with a view to ensuring the maximum liberty to students and establishing the right relation between the students, the teachers, and the bodies providing education—a relation which should be one of co-operation.' [1]

Almost equally important is the social atmosphere in which such education is carried on. The surroundings must suggest the home rather than the school. The story of adult education for a century past is one of heroism and the enduring of much hardness. The Interim Report on Social Conditions tells how men have walked miles in all weathers, after a heavy day's work lasting for ten or twelve hours, or even longer, in their determination to enjoy the fellowship of study and discussion. Often enough, prejudice and suspicion have shut them out of anything resembling comfort or even decency. If they have not met, like the martyrs, in 'dens and holes and caves of the earth,' they have frequently been

[1] Final Report, § 331

homeless in every true interpretation of the term. On the other hand, a welcome to a cheerful room, suggesting beauty and dignity of life, or even admission to a bare schoolroom furnished for small children, has been accompanied by conditions fettering discussion or limiting ordinary freedom of behaviour. This is even more true of rural areas than of towns and cities, though there is a heavy indictment of these also. The upshot is found in the recommendation of the Adult Education Committee respecting village institutes, a recommendation which puts into concrete form a principle that must be taken into account everywhere. After dwelling upon the importance of the housing problem and of improved transport, from the point of view of adult education, the Committee says :—

'The rural problem, from whatever point of view it is regarded—economic, social, or political—is essentially a problem of re-creating the rural community, of developing new social traditions and a new culture. The great need is for a living nucleus of communal activity in the village, which will be a centre from which radiate the influences of different forms of corporate effort, and to which the people are attracted to find the satisfaction of their social and intellectual needs. We conceive this nucleus to be a village institute, under full public control. . . .

'Under present conditions these activities are carried on to a greater or less extent, but more often than not they are hampered partly by the lack of accommodation which does not suffer from being under definitely sectarian or cramping philanthropic control, and partly by the unsuitability of such accommodation as there is.' [1]

The recommendation is that the State should, if necessary, spend £5,000,000 in securing such provision through local public bodies.[2] But this is not simply a demand for buildings. It is an insistence upon the right of free association, in suitable surroundings, for

[1] Final Report, §§ 276, 278. [2] Ibid., § 339.

the purpose of adult education. Facilities must 'be taken to the students in places where they are accustomed to assemble.' The corporate spirit is an integral part of the whole process; and wherever it has been developed in pursuit of other aims, there the enterprise of adult education must see and grasp its opportunity.

As will appear more fully in subsequent chapters, the distinguishing marks of adult education must be thoroughness combined with simplicity, living interest for the student together with enduring value for human life and thought, self-determination equally with finely equipped and sympathetic leadership, a free intercourse of varied mental types and social classes, and, above all, the motive that has revealed itself throughout the splendid quest of knowledge and wisdom for two generations.

'The adult education movement is inextricably woven with the whole of the organized life of the community. Whilst on the one hand it originates in a desire amongst individuals for adequate opportunities for self-expression and the cultivation of their personal powers and interests, it is, on the other hand, rooted in the social aspirations of the democratic movements of the country. In other words, it rests upon the twin principles of personal development and social service. It aims at satisfying the needs of the individual and at the attainment of new standards of citizenship and a better social order. In some cases the personal motive predominates. In perhaps the greater majority of cases the dynamic character of adult education is due to its social motive.'[1]

CHAPTER IV

THE RANGE OF ADULT EDUCATION

It has become an axiom that the scope of adult education should be as wide as the interests of the men and women to whom it makes its appeal.

'The adult, even when he has forgotten most of what

[1] Final Report, § 330.

he learnt at school before he was fourteen, cannot be put back to the spelling book and the multiplication table. In the interval between fourteen and eighteen he has been receiving an education, formless indeed and fragmentary, but emphatic enough, and in its way effective—the education of practical life. His adult education must be taken up at this point and on this plane. It must work from his existing avocation and interests, must begin by answering his existing inquiries and perplexities, and go on to the satisfaction of his aspirations. It must show him the reasons that underlie his daily work, the way in which that work has come to be arranged as it is, and how it can be arranged better, the relation of his work to that of others, and its place in the economics of the nation and the world.'[1]

A quaint commentary on this principle of approach is supplied by a story which Mr. Mansbridge tells:—

'A northern town developed to an amazing extent the formation of classes through its affiliated bodies. On one occasion its representatives went to a Carters' and Lorrymen's Trade Union, urging them to say what they wanted to study. Perplexity reigned until one said, "We're always behind the horse. We don't know much about him. Let us have a class on the horse." As a result a hundred and twenty carters attended a class for two successive winters. It is said that the horses in that town had a much better time ever after.'[2]

One vice of the educationist, especially when he has a tinge of the propagandist in him, is to insist upon trying to give people what he genuinely *thinks* they want (not even what he thinks, or perhaps knows, they need). As an illustration of that mistake, and its consequences, we may quote a typical incident from a base camp in France during the war. Among certain education officers it was taken for granted that men who were risking their lives and all that they had in the cause of their country

[1] Master of Balliol's Letter: Final Report, p. 2.
[2] Op. cit., p. 24.

would find supreme delight and inspiration in hearing of its glories and hopes. Two men were passing the door of a recreation hut one night just as the orderly was putting up a placard announcing a lecture. One of the men drew his companion's attention to the notice, only to elicit the response, given in a grunt and without a glance at the placard, 'H'm—more b— Empire, I s'pose!'

It is true that people cannot always analyze their own interests. That is no argument for camouflage either in the suggestion of a subject or in the treatment of it. All that is needed in such circumstances is a clear and simple statement, in as concrete a form as possible, of what is really proposed as the topic for a lecture, a class, or a discussion. Thus, for example, biology, baldly announced as the subject of a tutorial class, would probably appeal to few working people. A proper presentation of the theme and a sensible handling of it have made university tutorial classes upon it among the most popular ever held in the West Riding of Yorkshire.

'In the neighbourhood of Leeds the tutorial classes in biology have aroused considerable enthusiasm in working class circles over a period of several years. Mr. Walker, the tutor responsible for conducting these classes, wrote to us in reply to an inquiry, "Last night I met a class of twenty-one adults, men and women, chiefly factory workers, all in their second year of attendance. They walked varying distances up to eight miles to meet in class, and during our ten meetings since the commencement of the session only two absent marks are recorded in the register."'[1]

It is clear that three vital points are at issue:—

(i) If in adult education you are going to get anywhere along the line of serious and continued human study, it is not only worth while, it is imperative, that you should start where the student himself is willing and eager to

[1] Report of the Prime Minister's Committee on the Position of Natural Science in the Educational System of Great Britain, Cd. 9011, § 166.

start. It is to be remembered that study is the adult's recreation. The term 'recreational education' is misleading, but there is much that the pundits are wont to disparage as 'mere recreation' which is, or can be made, the finest possible introduction to a wide and generous culture. *In adult education the pupil must enjoy himself.*

(ii) There is no need to condescend to adult students, from whatever class they come. Though it is obvious that not all of them at the outset have sufficient insight or adequate mental training to set themselves to a prolonged course of study in an abstract or complex subject, there will be a surprising number ready and able to read, discuss, and write essays with the best of their more fortunately-born brothers. And of all it is true that they are supremely interested in the big things that lie at the heart of history, literature, natural science, economics, political theory, philosophy, and theology, if they are led to the living centre of such studies and not left to grope in the dusty integuments. *The average man is ready for all that justifies us in calling a subject 'humane.'*

(iii) There is a peril of narrowness here as everywhere. At one time friends of the W.E.A. felt some concern at the preponderance of economics and industrial history among the subjects freely chosen by the members of university tutorial classes, as these rapidly increased in number. Probably the chief reason for that choice was that the men and women most responsive to such an educational ideal as that of the W.E.A. were just those who were already doing their utmost for social progress through trade unions, the co-operative movement, and similar organizations. They felt their need of a more thorough training for the tasks to which they had already set their hands. As time went on, the range of subjects chosen became wider. To-day literature, art, music, natural science, and philosophy are all included in the list. It is recognized that the first thing to be achieved is some measure of culture for its own sake: the finer the man, the stronger his work, in whatever sphere. *But wise and sympathetic guidance is needed, and adult students never fail to appreciate and respond to it.*

There is, of course, not likely to be much difficulty regarding either of these three points, and especially the last of them, when you are dealing with a group of people whose purpose is so steady and persistent as that of a university tutorial class. The real problem arising out of the first two is presented by that large majority of ordinary men and women to whom education in any form appears a dull business at best. How, in order to reach this majority, but without losing seriousness of purpose or lowering our educational standards, may we include in our programme a variety of subjects and activities that would formerly have been thought purely recreational? In other words, how are we to win the great mass of the people, whose interests are so diverse and sometimes seem so superficial, and at the same time keep our true quest, that of an *educated* nation, steadily before us? Only as we do solve that riddle can we hope to extend adult education beyond the bounds of an intellectual, though perhaps unschooled, élite.

A further problem occurs in connection with the same two points, though of a different kind, when the interests through which we are to make our educational point of contact seem partisan, sectarian, or highly controversial in their tendency. What is to be done with a group which persists in beginning as Roman Catholics or Agnostics, Marxians or Imperialists? They are drawn together by a common enthusiasm, they are genuine in their desire to seek education for its own sake, but they start from a point which to the educationist seems in itself debatable, and they are criticized as prejudicing the very questions into which they have set out to inquire.

The only possible policy in either case is the bold one. 'The remedy for one-sided education is, in short, more education.' All education is a venture of faith, not only in the victory of truth, but in the honesty and persistency of other people's pursuit of it.

Let us look first at the simpler problem—that of combining education with recreation. Most people have at least some sort of interest in games. We have happily

come to see that the theory of physical education which, first in America and Canada, then in India, and now in Great Britain, is gradually replacing the old notion of physical drill and gymnastic display is psychologically as well as physiologically sound. Men who were qualified in medicine and psychology before they became teachers of physical education have learned the almost supreme value of 'the play spirit.' Such mass-games as Mr. George Goss and his colleagues are introducing into the country—as they did into the army in France, Belgium, Germany, Egypt, and India—bring not only the whole individual, but the whole community, into happy and at the same time literally re-creative activity. Instead of distorting a man's muscles in order to make him a successful pot-hunter, or training a few experts to supply an exhibition of sport to the flabby and unbreathed multitude, the new method would have everybody made fit, and as many as possible made finished athletes.

From this to the rapid spread of the folk-dance movement is a short stage. Indeed, the second is really included in the first. Already a new social, artistic, and historical interest has come to scores of villages through the efforts of people like Mr. Cecil Sharp and Miss Daking. It is true that here, as in the case of mass-games, scientific and well-trained teachers are indispensable, or the result is sheer, ludicrous failure. But the demand is creating the supply.

In music and the drama the resources are infinite. To mention specific names or organizations would be invidious, but the experience of the Y.M.C.A. and the adult schools, through which so many of our musical and dramatic pathfinders are working, shows what can be made of choral and orchestral societies, dramatic groups for the performance of miracle and mystery plays, and the attachment of little theatres to clubs and settlements. Nor does this type of educational work end in itself. It leads to other studies and other enthusiasms. But the secret of its success lies in teaching the people to make music, to perform plays, and even to write them, *for themselves*.

To do more than cite these as illustrations would be to trench upon the ground that is marked out for a later chapter. The marrow of the matter is in the exhortation, 'Be bold, be bold, and evermore be bold.'

'In the past, certain types of study have predominated owing to the interest of the students in the problems of government or industry. Broadly speaking, the most popular subjects of study have been those more or less intimately connected with citizenship in one or other of its aspects. We have no desire that these studies should become less important. On the contrary, we feel that an acquaintance with them is an indispensable part of the equipment of the citizen. Nevertheless, we think that opportunities involving other groups of studies and other means of stimulating and developing personal interests should be extended. There is already ample evidence to show that facilities of a more diversified kind would meet with response both among existing students and among others who have not yet enlisted in the movement. There ought, we think, to be far wider opportunities for the development of the study of natural science among adult students. Again, we think it desirable to emphasize the place which modern languages should occupy in the sphere of adult education. Moreover, we think it important that adult education should be interpreted in such a way as to include the encouragement of music and languages, of literature and drama, and of craftsmanship. In other words, adult education should cater for the varied needs and tastes of the people. The experiments which have just been made justify us in anticipating a great development of activity in these different directions.'[1]

If the objective is kept in view all the time, the educational character of the work done will not suffer from the recreational interest with which it starts.

The other problem may seem far more fraught with danger, not simply to sound education, but to social and political progress. Admitting that we must start from

[1] Final Report, § 332.

prevailing interests, what are we to do when these are frankly and definitely biassed? When and where does education cease and propaganda begin? It is the fashion now for every new movement to have its educational committee, and to regard as legitimate instruments for its own purposes the whole 'outfit' of lectures, classes, study circles, textbooks, bibliographies, and the rest. If the League of Nations Union, why not the Plebs League? Can we discern any ultimate principle of distinction between the respective educational activities of the W.E.A. and university extension on the one hand, and those of the Co-operative Union Central Study Committee, the adult schools, the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A., and the educational departments of the churches and the foreign missionary societies on the other?

The appeal is to sincerity and common sense. To suggest that the goal matters little, because the quest is all, is really cynicism regarding the nature of truth. On the other hand, it is but bare recognition of fact, and appreciation of the real virility of ordinary people, to assert that nobody ever does anything without a more or less definite object in view, and an object which is far from being an abstraction at that. I study Karl Marx or the Sermon on the Mount because, believing at the outset that I am on the track of an important truth, I want to know more clearly what that truth is and how it works out, or is likely to work out, in the life of my own time. The important consideration is whether, beginning with the one because my prejudices or convictions or experience lie that way, I am willing as frankly and fully to study the other, not for the purpose, predetermined, of attacking it, but in order that I may discover whether it embodies a further truth which in its own right commands my intellectual assent and my ethical and practical obedience. There are people to-day who, after a careful study of both, do not find them at all points mutually exclusive. My personal conclusions clearly must depend upon the power of ultimate truth to reveal itself, and upon my own candour of mind and resolution of will in pursuing it.

For in practice you very soon discover that you cannot study any fact or theory properly without being compelled to consider the counterbalancing fact or the contrary theory. That is why group study, as apart from exclusively individual work, is healthy in its atmosphere as well as likely to be sound in its results. Mind checks mind: group supplements and complements group. All the really vital topics are and must in the nature of things be controversial so long as we are alive, and possess any richness of personality and variety of experience. The function of the teacher in adult education is, above all, to see that no relevant fact is overlooked and no sincere point of view neglected or unfairly treated. So strongly did the Adult Education Committee believe in the value and self-correcting power of the loyal search for truth, wherever begun, that it sets its unanimous opinion on the matter in the forefront of its findings, backing this up at a later stage by that most indisputable of all proofs of genuineness, a financial recommendation :—

'It is, in our judgement, essential that whilst regularity of attendance and seriousness and continuity of study should be insisted upon, there must be freedom of teaching and freedom of expression. Without this the frank interchange of thought and experience which is essential in adult education will be impossible, and the work carried on will lose its vitality or change its character. We do not think that it is possible or desirable to eliminate from adult education the discussion of controversial questions: indeed, one of the greatest values of adult education is that highly controversial subjects can be freely discussed in the atmosphere of mutual confidence and tolerance. Only in this way are students able to correct their own experience and adapt their points of view to the accepted experience of others. We have, in an earlier chapter, firmly expressed the view that the defect of to-day is not that there is too much teaching which is partial or one-sided in character, but that there is too little of any kind.

'The State should not refuse financial support to institutions, colleges, and classes merely on the ground that they have a particular "atmosphere" or appeal specially to students of a particular type. All that it ought to ask is that they be concerned with serious study.' [1]

An educated nation is one that has learned to pursue its interests to the point of a true and catholic culture, to penetrate its prejudices until it has come at truth, and to discover that every man has a contribution to make to the great society in the service of which he attains to freedom.

CHAPTER V

EARLY EFFORTS AND IDEALS IN ADULT EDUCATION: MODERN DEVELOPMENTS

IT is customary to preface a patently dull or scrappy essay with the remark that 'a separate volume would be needed for the adequate treatment of this subject.' The remark is particularly true of the history of adult education in this country for the last three or four generations—that is, since it began to have any real history at all in Great Britain. But we may avoid the dullness and the scrappiness by grouping the main facts suitably, and referring the reader to the summary contained in the Adult Education Report, or to Mr. A. E. Dobbs's *Education and Social Movements, 1700–1850*,[2] if he desires further details.

I

'Attempts to provide for the education of adults did not begin with the nineteenth century. But they derived a new stimulus from the social and intellectual ferment which accompanied the break-up of the old regime. The history of adult education during the last

[1] Final Report, §§ 331, 336 *c*.
[2] Longmans, 10*s*. 6*d*. net.

hundred years falls into two broad divisions, of which one extends from 1800 to 1850, and the other from 1850 to the present day. To the experiments which were made in the first of these two periods, three main currents contributed. The first was that of religion, the second that of physical science, the third that of social and political agitation.'[1]

Our first group may seem curiously assorted, for it includes the adult schools, the mechanics' institutes, the Chartist and co-operative movements, and early trade unionism. Behind these, as forces of upheaval and change, lay the evangelical revival of the eighteenth century, the French Revolution, the Peninsular War, and the Industrial Revolution. The situation in Europe a century ago was in most respects not unlike that which we are facing in our own day, though the old world was hardly so completely shattered and the new not quite so chaotic. The outstanding fact was that men knew at last that they ought to be free, determined to secure their freedom, and wanted to equip themselves for the use of it. Authority in all guises was the enemy —the authority, that is, of tradition, of wealth, of dogma, and of arms, rather than of truth, goodness, and beauty.

It was necessary to begin very far back. When children were employed all day or all night in mines and factories they came to manhood and womanhood without having learned their letters. In the first adult schools the subjects were simply those of reading and writing. The Bible was the most accessible textbook, and it afforded an incomparable introduction to noble literature, world history, personal and social ethics, and the theory of society. Rapidly the curriculum of the schools widened, but to this day there has been no departure from the tradition set by the Nottingham school in 1798 and the Bristol one in 1812, and a definite period is devoted to Bible study at each session of an adult school.

The introduction of machinery into industry caused

[1] Final Report, § 5.

widespread unemployment for a time, and seemed likely to redouble the dependence of 'hands' upon the will of the 'masters' at the very time when the spirit of liberty was most abroad. It was due to the insight of Dr. George Birkbeck, professor of natural philosophy and chemistry at Glasgow, and to the encouragement he gave working men to attend lectures specially adapted to their needs, that the keener minds among the industrial workers were turned to the thought of mastering the machines and the scientific processes of which they would otherwise become the slaves. Thus arose, in 1799, mechanics' institutes, which for fifty years fostered a love of science, both pure and applied, and only later became centres of technical training for purposes primarily utilitarian. The Manchester Institute said of itself: 'It is not intended to teach the trade of the machine-maker, the dyer, the carpenter, or any other practical business; but there is no art which does not depend more or less on scientific principles, and to search out what these are, and to point out their practical application, will form the chief objects of this institution.' Literary studies were in many cases added. 'In 1851 it was estimated that there were 610 institutes in England, with a membership of over 600,000, that the number of lectures in 1850 was 3,054, and that the number of students attending classes was 16,029.'[1] Mr. J. H. Whitley's happy rendering of a familiar quotation from Hippocrates, 'Love of my fellows and love of my job,' expresses an ideal which these institutes did much to further.

The members of the mechanics' institutes themselves were alive to the dangers which beset that movement. As early as 1824 a group of mechanics said: 'Nothing can persuade us but that all systems of education are false which do not teach a man his political duties and rights.' Agitations for political and social reform were constantly sweeping the country. But practically every leader in those movements impressed constantly upon

[1] Final Report, § 9.

his followers that changed conditions would prove futile unless there was a corresponding growth of mind and character among the men and women for whose benefit they were sought. Robert Owen, by his practical experiments at New Lanark, laid the foundations of the co-operative movement. William Lovett was the father of Chartism: Thomas Cooper was among its prophets. Francis Place, from his tailor's shop and his amazing library in Charing Cross Road, steadily cultivated the ferment of new ideas among the politicians at Westminster. All of them worked incessantly and zealously for the spread of education. Lovett, Cooper, and Place had fought poverty from their childhood, and won familiarity with books at the price of sleep, of food, and, in the case of Lovett the cabinet-maker and Cooper the shoemaker, of health itself. Such devotion was bound to communicate itself. Whether the various organizations were primarily political, economic, and social in aim or not, the life in them was that of educated men. They brought into existence lectures, concerts, classes, and schools. They stimulated the study of literature, history, languages, music, and even the Greek Testament, as well as of economic and political theory. Owen's community at Ralahine was 'to promote the mental and moral improvement of the adult members' as well as to practise co-operation. Their central principle was that of brotherhood. Many co-operative societies, such as those at Birmingham in 1828, Salford in 1831, and Sutton-in-Ashfield in 1834, established libraries, lectures, and classes. The modern movement in co-operation which began at Rochdale in 1844 set up an educational department in 1848, which has grown to the enormous proportions of the present organization.

The trade unions had not come into real power during the first half of last century, but those that were set up were of necessity deeply influenced by the example of the Chartists and co-operators, and in connexion with most of them there was a 'class for mutual instruction'; the Flint glassmakers were exhorted to 'get intelligence instead of alcohol,' as being 'sweeter and more lasting'!

II

The change which took place in the middle of the century has been concisely stated thus:—

'The year 1850, which was in more than one way a turning-point in English social history, is also a natural division between one period of educational activity and another.

'In the sphere of educational effort, the character of the agencies at work and the motives behind them underwent an equally noticeable change. Certain movements, in particular the adult schools and co-operation, expanded. . . . But in the main the forces which entered the field were new. They consisted, first, of the revival and multiplication of university institutions; secondly, of the creation of a national system of elementary, and later of higher, education provided by the State; thirdly, of the revival of the demand for higher education on the part of working men and women, inspired by somewhat the same motives as had guided the Chartists and early co-operators, but attacking the problem on a higher plane and with the equipment provided by a more effective training in childhood. At the beginning of the period Adult Education was still the spontaneous effort of a few working-class enthusiasts to provide for themselves educational opportunities in a world where any general system of education was still unknown. At the end the spontaneous demand remained, and was, indeed, more insistent than ever before. But in the interval both the universities had begun to do something to aid in its satisfaction, and it was no longer a substitute for the earlier stages of education, but the completion of them.' [1]

The first half of this period was marked by the foundation of people's colleges in the chief industrial centres of the country. Initiated, for the most part, by a little band of eager spirits who themselves came from the ancient universities, they owed their strength and

[1] Final Report, §§ 25, 26.

stability to the ready response of the working men for whom they were designed, and who were given a full share in the conduct of them. The pioneer was a Congregational minister of Sheffield, the Rev. R. S. Bayley, and it was the success of the People's College which he was the means of establishing there that kindled the imagination of Maurice, Kingsley, and their fellow-enthusiasts. The London Working Men's College, opened in 1854, was the direct outcome of the Sheffield experiment. Maurice was bent upon making possible to the working classes the enjoyment of that friendship in pursuit of a broad and systematic culture which he regarded as the supreme glory of his own college days. He insisted that the work done should be 'regular and organic, not taking the form of mere miscellaneous lectures, or even of classes not related to each other.'

The ultimate ambition cherished by Maurice was that the people's colleges should in effect become outlying centres of university life, and that working men should be able from them to take their degrees, on passing the required examinations. While that ideal was not fulfilled, the interest aroused by the movement was creative. A great factor in revealing the inadequacy of the old universities in face of this great demand for the higher education of the mass of the people was the publication of the searching reports presented by the Royal Commissions on the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, in 1852 and subsequent years. Sewell, in 1850, asked, 'Though it may be impossible to bring the masses requiring education to the University, may it not be possible to carry the University to them?' and suggested the establishment by Oxford and Cambridge of professorships and lectureships in the principal towns of the provinces. Jowett, in 1874, advocated the expenditure of large sums from the university revenues upon setting up colleges in large towns. But it was by the efforts of Dr. James Stuart, of Cambridge, who gained enthusiasm from his experience in lecturing to working people in Crewe and Rochdale, that Cambridge was induced to adopt a system of continuous courses, instead of isolated

lectures; to require paper work from the students; and to arrange for the lectures to be preceded or followed by a class in which the students could enter upon informal discussion with the lecturer, as Dr. Stuart's audiences had done on their own initiative at Rochdale. These are the characteristic features of 'university extension.' The Cambridge experiments of 1873 were conducted in Derby, Leicester, and Nottingham (where the Trades Council had asked for such a course). The University of London followed the example of Cambridge in 1876, and Oxford took up extension work in 1878.

One remarkable outcome of certain people's colleges on the one hand, and of the extension courses conducted in various large towns on the other, was the foundation of university colleges such as those at Sheffield and Nottingham, Exeter and Reading. Many of these have now developed into independent universities which, while providing primarily for the needs of young men and women who are able to take a full three or four years' degree course in one of the ordinary faculties—law, medicine, science, arts, divinity, and latterly commerce —have done much to aid the higher education of working men and women through lecture courses, tutorial classes, and similar activities. In the main, however, extension work of the recognized type has been carried on chiefly by Oxford, Cambridge, and London. But while it has rendered invaluable service in the provision of systematic lecture courses by highly qualified lecturers, the very size of the audiences attracted has diminished the possibility of intensive study and of vital personal intercourse between the lecturer and his students.

The interest in adult education and the enthusiasm for social service which had been steadily growing in the universities found an expression in a quite novel experiment, which rapidly developed into an established type of educational effort. Toynbee Hall, Whitechapel, founded in 1884, was the first 'university settlement.' Its object was to enable young graduates to share in practical fashion the lives and thoughts of the working classes by taking up residence among them, and to carry

the culture of the university into industrial areas while gaining for the university an opportunity of real contact with the harder facts of life. The settlement aimed at being both a laboratory of research and a centre of liberal teaching, as well as proving a home of truly democratic social intercourse. To quote the memorandum issued in connection with Toynbee Hall, the proposal was 'To provide education and the means of recreation and enjoyment for the people of the poorer districts of London and other great cities; to inquire into the conditions of the poor, and to consider and advance plans calculated to promote their welfare.' Under the wardenship of Canon Barnett, Toynbee Hall very nobly fulfilled these ideals, co-operated with the university extension authorities (and, later, with the W.E.A.), and perpetually initiated some fresh enterprise, such as the annual art exhibition in Whitechapel. Oxford House was founded at Bethnal Green in the same year as Toynbee Hall, and Cambridge House at Camberwell followed. Settlements with similar aims but slightly different connexions sprang up. T. H. Green and Dr. Fairbairn were the moving spirits in the establishment of Mansfield House, Canning Town, which appealed to the Free Church members of Oxford University much as Oxford House did to the Anglicans. Browning Hall, Walworth, was an independent effort which none the less secured the special sympathy of Cambridge Free Churchmen. The Women's Settlement at Canning Town was the outcome of the increasing sense of citizenship among educated women, and the Passmore Edwards Settlement in Bloomsbury, founded in 1897, stated its aim thus: 'With the same sympathies, but different experience of life, we meet to exchange ideas and to discuss social questions in the hope that as we learn to know one another better a feeling of fellowship may arise among us.' Settlements were founded in the provincial cities, as the newer universities came to develop a stronger corporate consciousness among their senior members and undergraduates.

Many settlements had, in addition to their residences and halls, clubs for men and boys. The Canning Town

Women's Settlement set up a complete, though small, hospital for women. Towards the end of the nineteenth century there was a tendency for their social and philanthropic activities to overshadow their directly educational work. In the sense that frank intercourse between people of divergent views and differing economic circumstances, and definite participation in civic affairs with a view to progressive action, is educational, the settlements bore witness to a most important aspect of adult educational work.

Meantime the earlier movements grew in extent and comprehensiveness. The adult schools took a new lease of life under the stimulus of the Society of Friends in Birmingham in 1852, and from 1874 onwards they have devoted themselves to a broad programme of study, based always, as at the first, upon the weekly half-hour's discussion of the Bible. The co-operative movement, which began with such generous educational ideals, passed through a period when these were subordinated to the exigencies of propaganda, but in due time a recovery took place, and the programme widened again. Throughout the whole period, however, the movement supported other educational enterprises, and the Adult Education Committee pays a high tribute to the service thus rendered when it says:—

'There would, but for Co-operation, have been far less continued education, especially in the North of England, and far fewer facilities for culture. There might have been, as far as can be judged, no University Extension Movement, at least no Extension Movement in industrial towns. The Workers' Educational Association, which was derived in part from the educational traditions of the Co-operative Movement, would probably never have been founded. Co-operators were, in fact, the one working class body which continuously and persistently stood for a humane education as an essential element in the social aims of democracy.' [1]

[1] Final Report, § 43.

Such were the main lines of the immense advance made in adult education during the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER VI

'BEFORE THE WAR'—AND SINCE

THE first fourteen years of the present century are marked off by more than a convention of the calendar from all that preceded them, as well as from all that followed. In the sphere of adult education they saw a revision of methods and machinery in all directions—on the part of the State and local education authorities, as well as on that of universities and voluntary bodies. 'The Board of Education Act of 1899,' remarks Professor J. W. Adamson in his *Guide to the History of Education*,[1] 'which came into operation in the final year of the [nineteenth] century, created a central authority over all grades of public instruction, university education not entirely excepted. The Education Act of 1902 added local education authorities to the central authority created in 1899, these local bodies having within their own territories a jurisdiction as comprehensive as that of the Board of Education itself.' The roots of Mr. Fisher's far-reaching Education Act of 1918 were undoubtedly in the pre-war period. Thus public bodies have gradually advanced in the knowledge first of what they *may* do legally, and then of what they *must* do, either as a statutory requirement or upon demand presented by representative groups of citizens. It is to be observed that the 1918 Act, while making no overt provision for adult education, flings the whole field open by laying upon the local education authority responsibility for all forms of education given within its area; and the *Draft Proposed Revised Regulations for Continuation, Technical, and Art Courses in England and*

[1] S.P.C.K., 8*d*. net.

Wales[1] issued by the Board, together with the *Draft Suggestions for the Arrangement of Schemes under the Education Act, 1918*,[2] sent out by that same cautious body, leave little doubt that the local education authority is expected henceforth to concern itself very closely with adult non-vocational education. The bare fact that 'young persons' are to be given systematic continued education till they arrive at the age of sixteen, and ultimately till they are eighteen, paves the way, as we have already pointed out, for a much broader and deeper development of adult education.

Not less important than this legislative progress is the advance in voluntary effort and method marked during these notable fourteen years by the foundation of the Workers' Educational Association, the creation of Ruskin College and the Central Labour College, the beginning of the non-residential settlement movement, and the introduction, through a score of channels, of the study-circle method. During the war, and since, organizations of old standing, like the Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A., which formerly did not regard adult education as part of their function, have made it one of the most prominent features of their programmes. The making of music and the performance of plays by the people themselves, the revival of folk-dancing, the practice of mass-games, and the revelation of the humane value to be found (as the women's institutes have found it) in the proper study of domestic subjects, have all enriched as well as deepened our conception of adult education.

The Workers' Educational Association sprang from the enthusiasm of Mr. Albert Mansbridge, who was anxious to see co-operative educational effort directed towards non-vocational studies, while, as a university extension student and a strong believer in trade unionism, he saw the necessity of drawing the universities and the working classes into closer relationship. In 1903 the W.E.A. took definite form. A conference at Oxford in 1905 led

[1] Board of Education, February 1917: H.M. Stationery Office, 4*d*. net.

[2] Board of Education, 1919: H.M. Stationery Office, 6*d*. net.

to a wide propaganda, and in 1906 the first university tutorial class was started at Rochdale, with Mr. R. H. Tawney as tutor.

The whole question of university tutorial classes was fully debated in another conference at Oxford about this time, and the result was the publication of a report entitled *Oxford and Working Class Education*, which speedily convinced other universities of the great opportunities presented by the W.E.A. for bringing university teaching to working men and women. The association embarked on activities of many kinds—classes, lectures, study circles, conferences, summer schools, the creation of local public interest in elementary education, and the publication of literature. But its characteristic work has been the organization of university tutorial classes. These are composed of men and women, not more than thirty-two in number in any one class, who commit themselves to a three years' course of study under a tutor appointed by a committee representing a university and the W.E.A. (or other organizing body) in equal proportions. Each class meets twenty-four times a year for an hour's lecture, followed by at least an hour's discussion, and essays are written by the students. The subjects range from economics and industrial history to biology, literature, and music. The arrangements for the meetings, the choice of subjects for the class, and, within the necessary limits, the choice of the tutor, rest with the class itself. The standard maintained is that of a university honours course. There is no examination, but the Board of Education satisfies itself by inspection as to the value of the work done, and under its regulations substantial grants are payable to approved classes, these grants being supplemented from the funds of the university and of the local education authority, while the members themselves pay a nominal fee.

The association describes itself as 'a Federation of over 3,000 Educational and Workers' Organizations—Non-Sectarian, Non-Political.' It has branches in all parts of the country, and there are daughter associations in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and South Africa.

Canon William Temple has been president of the W.E.A. since 1906, and Mr. Mansbridge was secretary, until in 1916 ill-health compelled him to relinquish his office.

The World Association for Adult Education was formed in 1919 by Mr. Mansbridge, and has as its object the federation of adult educational movements in all lands for the purpose of exchanging information, recording experience, and constructively discussing problems and policy.

Ruskin College, Oxford, founded in 1891, resulted from the recognition by organized labour that if it is to attain its social and political ideals it must provide for the training of its leaders. Ruskin College is residential, which the people's colleges of last century were not. The object of the college is 'to equip the students in such a way as to increase their usefulness to the Labour Movement in general, and to the Societies who sent them to the College in particular.' Most of the men taking the one or two years' course are maintained by their trade unions or other similar societies, and the government of the college is vested in representatives appointed by any trade union, trades and labour council, co-operative society, or other working class organization which at its own expense maintains a student there or gives an annual subscription of £25 or upwards. The college has recently been opened to women, and it is interesting to observe that the official definition of a curriculum adequate to the purpose of the founders and the governing bodies states that a student requires 'in the first place, a good knowledge of the political, constitutional, and industrial history of his own country, and some acquaintance with the history of other countries. Secondly, he should understand the working of political institutions—national and local. Thirdly, he must have a clear grasp of economic science. Fourthly, he must possess special knowledge of the history, methods, and objects of working class organizations, such as the trade union and co-operative movements. Fifthly, he must learn the art of self-expression, both on paper and in speech, so that he may be able to state his point of view clearly and

forcibly as occasion arises. Finally, he must have, not merely an intelligent understanding of the society in which he lives, but a clear vision of the better world-wide society for which he is hoping to work.'

The Central Labour College (now known as the Labour College, London) was established in 1909 by a labour group which considered Ruskin College too indefinite in its purpose and teaching. Taking as its object 'to educate and train trade unionists in social science and to take part in the political and industrial life of the Labour Movement,' it pursues a frankly partisan policy: 'it teaches the workman to look for the causes of social evils and the problems arising therefrom in the material foundation of society; (it believes) that these causes are in the last analysis economic; that their elimination involves in the first place economic changes of such a character as to lead to the eradication of capitalist economy. . . . For this reason the Labour College lays no claim to being non-partisan or non-political. As it exists for a partisan movement, it must be opposed to all those in opposition to that movement. But its partisanship is a consequence of the actual facts which it scientifically unfolds.' The position thus taken, while it would seem to cut across all the principles of a liberal education, or even of freedom of thought, is actually leading, in the opinion of some who know the movement best and are qualified to judge, to a less doctrinal teaching than might be anticipated. Men cannot give themselves to the study of one side of a question without being forced to recognize in some degree the strength of the other. The very sincerity with which they seek knowledge in a narrow way is bound to have some ultimate effect in the broadening of their ideas. Like Ruskin College, the Labour College is residential, and is governed by a board of which the members represent labour organizations establishing scholarships at the college; but in the case of the Labour College these must be organizations eligible for affiliation to the Labour Party. Three such organizations at present share the financial responsibility between them. The Labour College has extension work in the form of 'lecture

classes,' which have of late made great headway in the mining districts of South Wales and in the industrial districts of the North of England and the West of Scotland.

There have been some ventures in the direction of providing a short collegiate course for working women. The National Adult School Union has arranged in two successive winters for a group of working girls to take six months of study along general non-vocational lines, under the direction of a tutor. The Y.W.C.A. has now started a definite residential college for working women at Beckenham, the course occupying a year. Some girls have come to the winter schools and the Working Women's College for the complete course at the expense of the business firms which employ them. Certain local education authorities have made grants in respect of students from their areas. The remainder of the students pay their own way—and some are spending their savings to do so—but the promoters of the schemes hope to be able to secure small bursaries to help them. The aim in each case is equipment for life and service, in whatever sphere, by the enrichment of the personality rather than by technical instruction, and the spirit of the administration is democratic.

Woodbrooke and Fircroft, Birmingham, are 'half-college and half-settlement.' Woodbrooke, 'founded in 1903, owes its inspiration largely to the Adult School Movement and the Society of Friends.' It is intended to be 'a centre for the diffusion of religious knowledge, a training-place for social service, a house of study with university men for those who could otherwise hope for no such advantage.' Fircroft, on the other hand, was founded in 1909 as the result of a visit to Danish high schools paid four years previously by a group of people interested in adult education, and is intended to apply the principles of those schools to conditions in this country. The object is to supplement the activities of adult schools and kindred bodies by offering a year's course of systematic study. Training for citizenship is the objective. The college is managed by a committee including

representatives of the adult school movement and the Workers' Educational Association.

Several notable settlements have been established during the last twenty-five years on the lines laid down by Arnold Toynbee and Canon Barnett. Such, for example, are the University and Broad Plain Settlements in Bristol, the Hulme and Ancoats Settlements in Manchester, the Birmingham and Liverpool Women's Settlements, the Leys Settlement in London (a definite public school undertaking), and the Y.M.C.A. Settlement founded at Sheffield in 1919.

A new type is now developing, however, which is in no way a rival to the old, but differs from it in several important respects. Its essential characteristic is that it does not depend upon getting a group of educated people from a distance to come and live in the district concerned, but focuses the desires and efforts of the working people who already live there by providing suitable premises and the leadership of an experienced and sympathetic warden, paid or voluntary, who lives on or near these premises. Education is the dominant purpose of these non-residential settlements, which make no provision for the activities of the ordinary club, the social life of the settlement being just that which is the inevitable result of the gathering together of like-minded people for a common end. The most striking examples of this sort of work are Lemington-on-Tyne and Beechcroft, Birkenhead, where the wardens have been occupied in business or professional life, but have contrived in their leisure time to build up an educational organism of a very living kind. Beechcroft began just before the war, and is administered by representatives of adult schools, trade unions, co-operative societies, the University of Liverpool, and the School of Social Service. The W.E.A., the Labour College, the adult schools, the trade unions, the women's organizations, carry on an amazingly full programme of classes, lectures, study circles, week-end schools, and conferences, with the widest possible range of non-vocational subjects. The Lemington Settlement sprang out of an adult school, but now gathers together

all the voluntary adult educational efforts in the neighbourhood, and in addition to its classes and lectures, conducts anything from a children's clinic to a regional survey!

Swarthmore, Leeds, was inaugurated not long before the war, but St. Mary's, York, has had a rather longer history. Both have resident wardens, and each may best be described as 'a settlement for evening study designed for the equipment of men and women desiring to engage in social and religious work,' though the last clause applies less definitely to St. Mary's than to Swarthmore. Each originated with the Society of Friends, and draws its governing body and chief support mainly from that quarter, though neither is in any sense denominational. University tutorial classes, extension lectures, study groups, musical societies, and similar activities, make up the programme.

The increase in the number of such settlements and the enrichment of their programme of educational work are likely to be greatly stimulated by the recent formation of the Educational Settlements Association, which is constituted by representation from settlements, or organizations doing the work of settlements, that place education in the forefront of their aims. It seeks by conference to help each settlement to work out the programme most suited to the genius of its own neighbourhood, and stimulates experiments in fresh fields or by hitherto untried methods.

Parallel with these groupings of men and women in town and village for educational stimulus and mutual help has been the growth of summer schools. Every year the Oxford Extension Delegacy and the Cambridge Syndicate for Extension Lectures combine to hold a summer meeting. A general subject of topical as well as educational interest is chosen, and a number of authoritative and prominent men and women are secured as lecturers. The value of the meetings lies largely in the general stimulus given to those who attend.

The summer schools organized by the tutorial class committees are of a more intensive character, and the

lectures are simply the necessary preliminary to concentration upon group discussion and individual tutorial work. The intention is to enable men and women who have taken one, two, three, or more years in a university tutorial class to carry their studies a clear step further.

Very successful summer schools are promoted by various propagandist bodies such as the Interdenominational Council of Social Service Unions, the various foreign missionary societies, or the League of Nations Union. In these, definite courses of lectures on such subjects as housing, comparative religions, or foreign politics are given, and much of the time is devoted to the training of study circle leaders by actual participation in circle work.

The adult schools have been very successful in organizing 'week-end schools,' when a lecturer in the course of a week-end has been able either to give an impulse to the formation of classes or study groups in the locality, or has brought to a point the work that has for some time been carried on there through such agencies.

Study-circle methods were originally introduced into this country from America, through the Student Christian Movement and the missionary societies. They are now utilized by all sorts of organizations, both propagandist and purely educational. Their value lies in stimulating careful reading and systematic discussion, under a trained leader, of the various textbooks prepared for this special purpose. The textbook takes the place of the lecturer: the function of the leader is so to guide discussion that it is purposive and fruitful, and so to handle the circle that every member is encouraged to make his or her characteristic contribution. The method has great possibilities, but there is a tendency to rob it of all its real worth by supposing that any number of people may join a circle, any book will do as a basis of discussion, and any enthusiastic person can succeed as a leader.

Libraries and museums are obviously highly important factors in adult education. The Public Libraries Act of 1919 [1] has carried into effect a number of the recom-

[1] [9 & 10 Geo. 5, ch. 93], H.M. Stationery Office, 1s. net.

mendations made by the Adult Education Committee in its *Interim Report on Libraries and Museums*,[1] with the result that in many cases these will now come under the jurisdiction of the local education authority, which will have much greater facilities for establishing circulating libraries, especially in rural areas. It is to be hoped that the Central Library for Students (housed at 20 Tavistock Square, London) may ultimately be made a national organization. Meantime it is rendering indispensable aid to adult education by supplying the more expensive or less commonly used books to individual students, or groups, on payment simply of carriage to and fro.

During the war many experiments in adult education were made on a very large scale. It was left to voluntary organizations to initiate non-vocational lectures and classes among the troops, and to supply the great demand for books of an educational character. To the Y.M.C.A. belongs much of the credit for all that was done in this direction until, just before the armistice, the War Office took the work over and set up its own scheme. Before the war the Y.M.C.A. did educational work in its larger associations, but the subjects were chiefly commercial. When faced with the great problem of the men in the camps, and given facilities by the War Office, it set up a strong 'Y.M.C.A. Universities Committee,' on which all the universities of Great Britain, and the chief voluntary bodies such as the W.E.A., N.A.S.U., N.U.T., Co-operative Union, and Association of Directors and Secretaries of Education, appointed representatives. What it accomplished may be found summarized in the Adult Education Committee's Report and in its published records.[2] Mr. Fisher, in his foreword to *A Short Record of the Educational Work of the Y.M.C.A. with the British Armies in France* (with which was issued a similar record of work in Salonica, Egypt, Malta, and the Home Camps), says :—

[1] Cd. 9237, H.M. Stationery Office, 3*d*. net.

[2] To be obtained from the Y.M.C.A. Education Department, 13 Russell Square, W.C.1.

'The experiment of organizing educational work upon the Lines of Communication of our Armies in the field was, so far as I know, entirely novel in character, and it was undoubtedly worked in circumstances of peculiar difficulty. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that almost every feature of the situation was adverse to the undertaking, except what is, after all, the most vital element in the success of any enterprise, the will to succeed. The Young Men's Christian Association did succeed. They divined and did their best to satisfy a real hunger for intellectual improvement among our troops. To them, and to the Army Authorities in France, under whom they worked, belongs the credit of introducing and developing the largest scheme of adult education which has ever at any time been launched from this country.'

Education in the broadest non-vocational sense is now an integral part of the Y.M.C.A. programme, under the guidance of the same committee, and in practical co-operation with every form of official and voluntary organization.

Thus the multitude and variety of efforts in adult education has increased rather than diminished during the war, and the spirit of co-operation is being more widely diffused. The relationships between the different parts of the machine will be discussed in the next chapter. The effect is that official bodies are stimulated to create such excellent pieces of work as the L.C.C. non-vocational evening institutes, or the Bradford evening centres, while the voluntary bodies are strengthened by the moral and financial support of local education authorities.

The fact upon which it is important to dwell, in the light of such a brief survey of activities as could be attempted in these pages, is that the old rigidity and utilitarianism are disappearing. We are learning to begin with existing interests, and to bring into play the whole personality of the people who are to be educated. This has already been emphasized in our chapter on

'The Range of Adult Education.' The deeper implication of it is that we are recognizing the fundamental issue of freedom in education—the fact that to get the best out of people you must encourage them to get the best out of themselves by expressing their characteristic desires and ideals.

CHAPTER VII

VOLUNTARISM AND THE STATE

It is a pet theory with some people that voluntary bodies go to all the trouble and risk of initiating a new form of work, and then the Government comes along, takes it over, and leaves the unofficial organization to begin the same hard experience all over again in some fresh direction. Even were that the case, the voluntary bodies would still have all the joy and glory of great adventures. They would occupy the honourable post of pathfinders to humanity in general.

In the case of adult education, however, that version of the ordinary process neither is nor can be accurate. It is true enough that voluntary bodies invariably show the way. It is equally true that in course of time the State comes in to play a substantial part in the occupation of the new territory so valiantly explored. But if the State did not, the voluntary bodies could never overtake the opportunities that their own efforts have opened out. And in the end the State can never dispense with the activities of the voluntary bodies in developing the land that has already come into possession, as well as in pioneering still further.

Just fifty years ago the State made a real beginning in elementary education. Practically within the present century, as we have seen, it set up something like an adequate machinery. Now it has recognized in some degree its duty with regard to adult education, and it is time to work out the plan of partnership between the

State (as represented by the Board of Education), the local education authorities, the universities, and the voluntary bodies.

All the problems of organization, administration, and finance are distributed among these four, and determined by their relationships. Broadly considered, the fourth deals with demand and the first three with supply.

This little volume is not intended to deal with technicalities in detail. It would seem best, therefore, to outline here the characteristic functions proper to each of the four factors, and to show in a general way how these combine to set forward the great task of adult education.

(I) Why is it that so often admirable lectures are offered to the multitude by benevolent and learned institutions at an absurdly low charge, or at none at all, and yet, like the people in the parable, 'they all, with one accord, begin to make excuse'—or more probably do not even take that amount of trouble, but just stay away? How are we to account for the very frequently miserable attendance at classes provided by the local authority? These experiences are generally taken as proof positive that the masses have no real interest in education. A great deal of disgusted cynicism is uttered as a result in certain quarters. But the true deduction is quite different. 'Boys will be boys'—and men will be men. Before you can induce a given group of grown people to enter upon a course of serious study you must get them literally to tell you what they want. They may at first find some difficulty in making up their own minds. But it is a fatal mistake to imagine, therefore, that anyone else can do it for them. Voluntary bodies exist for the purpose of helping people to find out what they want, and to go in the right way to the proper source of supply.

This, then, is the task of the voluntary organizations:—

'Broadly speaking, the advance of adult education can proceed only as quickly as voluntary agencies can stimulate, focus, and organize the demand for it. In the

last resort the volume of educational activity is determined not by the capacity of the universities and education authorities to provide facilities, but by the ability of organizing bodies to give shape and substance to the demand. The organizing work of voluntary bodies should, therefore, be maintained and developed.' [1]

Such a recommendation naturally has in view the more systematic forms of adult education, such as regular classes and lecture courses. The field to be covered, however, goes far beyond this. Despite the striking advance that has taken place, even during the war, and the increased demand for adult education that has now arisen, the percentage of people reached at present by all the agencies in the country is lamentably and even perilously small. The problem of how to reach the rest is still very far from solution. As we have seen, all sorts of experiments must be tried and very elementary methods utilized if we are to accomplish this colossal task. And for that the services of the voluntary bodies are indispensable. The universities may accommodate themselves most generously to popular needs, but unless they maintain a certain standard of work, they cease to render the special service to the community for which they were established. Local education authorities have gained wide liberties, but they must always in large measure act according to schedule if anything like effective public control of public funds is to be maintained. The Board of Education advises, and lays down regulations, but executive work in education is not its province. So the voluntary bodies must, in this preparatory and explanatory work, afford the supply as well as focus the demand. For example, in the winter 1919–1920, the Y.M.C.A. in South Wales organized short lecture courses, some miscellaneous and some continuous, with discussion and paper work following each, in about a hundred industrial towns and villages. A distinguished inspector commended the work very

[1] Final Report, § 335.

highly, but pointed out that if the lecture courses were made to conform to the conditions for a grant from the Education Authority, they would lose just that precise value which had won his commendation—the gathering together of men and women for a serious piece of work which yet was not so concentrated and long continued as to fail to bring these people in. Having been brought in, the students could be held together for more developed work next winter. The inspector therefore recommended that while the higher grade, grant-earning work should be established next winter, the other type should be kept going also, because it was doing the community more good as a recruiting ground, and as meeting a hitherto unsatisfied need, than the Association could afford to leave undone for the sake of screwing all its work up to a grant-in-aid standard, and securing public financial assistance.

It is in the light of needs like this that the Adult Education Committee further says :—

'It is also highly desirable that the varied and less systematic educational activities of voluntary bodies should be extended.'

Finally it opens up a fascinating field in a third recommendation :—

'We suggest that voluntary associations should give fuller consideration to the needs of young adults between the age of eighteen and manhood and womanhood.' [1]

'Adult' will, before long, receive a new connotation. 'Young person' in the Fisher Act means one who is no longer a schoolboy and cannot be called a man or woman, but who yet is remaining at school for the day continuation classes. Ultimately that will be until he or she is eighteen. Thus we arrive at a definition of 'young adult' as one who has completed the continuation school course, is magnificent material for the free personal and

[1] Final Report, § 335.

social development that adult education sets out to secure, and is correspondingly a tragic loss if left to drift at such a critical moment. For adult education has up till now begun, as a rule, with people who are at least two or three years further on—just because there was no very clearly marked point between a school-leaving age of fourteen and a general maturity reached at any time before twenty-five. The really tremendous nature of this challenge we can scarcely appreciate till the first few groups of continuation school pupils have completed their course. It will come home to us later, when after the Act has come into operation throughout the country a million or so leave the continuation schools each year. But it behoves us to consider what lies before us, and to make due preparation.

(II) The universities come between the strictly voluntary organizations and the national or local official bodies. They are independent corporations, yet are controlled by Acts of Parliament and charters. They live in part on endowments, in part on public subscriptions and the fees of the students, in part on Treasury grants, while in some cases they receive a certain amount of rate aid also. The progress of democracy in their spirit and administration is becoming very marked. None the less there is of necessity a certain element of autocracy in the government of them. Their essential business is to provide teaching of an accepted standard, and with that obviously goes the stimulation of the teachers to write books, and the development of facilities for students to profit by the various means of study which the university of to-day offers. Examinations are not the *raison d'être* of a university, as the misguided undergraduate too often supposes!

The course from matriculation to final degree examinations brings the student after all, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, only to the verge of adult life, whether in years or in experience, and at the beginning of this book it was urged that experience of the rough and tumble of adult life is an essential ingredient in adult education. Clearly, therefore, the contribution of the universities

to adult education cannot lie in the mere making of graduates, as the university itself will admit. That contribution must come by way of extra-mural work—activities in the world beyond its own walls. Thus far these activities have consisted in arranging extension courses, and (in conjunction with a voluntary organizing body like the W.E.A.) appointing the tutors for university tutorial classes. Certain of the younger universities have endeavoured to provide evening classes for industrial and other workers, who might, if they continued long enough (a matter of several years), in this way take a degree; but that plan has not succeeded as its promoters hoped. For adults, and especially working class adults, desire neither degree nor diploma. They seek knowledge and wisdom, with no special label to mark their acquirement (or presumed acquirement) of it. They are out for the real thing—education by personal contact with well-educated men. This the universities want to give. But they are hampered in various ways, and the Adult Education Committee's Report seeks in its recommendations to help in the removal of these hindrances.

The principal proposal made by the Committee follows upon the general statement that 'the provision of a liberal education for adult students should be regarded by universities as a normal and necessary part of their functions.' It is that 'there should be established at each university a department of extra-mural education with an academic head,' i.e. an official who gives his time and strength to this work, and who represents it on the Senate or elsewhere, with the same status as the head of a constituent college or the dean of a faculty. Obviously the existing Tutorial Classes Joint Committee and Extension Board or Delegacy would afford the nucleus of such an extra-mural authority, each group still carrying on its own work, and it is suggested that, in addition, different types of non-academic interests should have representatives. Such a department would

'(1) Promote the further development of such kinds

of extra-mural adult education as can properly be assisted by the universities.

'(2) Represent the needs and desires of adult students to the university authorities.

'(3) Report on questions arising from the work of the university in the sphere of adult education, such as the requirements of new types of students, the value of more educational experiments, and the possibility of extending the influence of the universities into fields as yet untouched by them.' [1]

The Committee adds the suggestion that universities should consider carefully the question of providing resident tutors in those districts in which they carry on a substantial amount of extra-mural work, with a view, ultimately, to promoting the establishment of local colleges, and urges the importance of making it possible for adult students to study for short periods in universities by means of 'summer' schools extended throughout the year.

Already some universities are addressing themselves to this problem, and concrete schemes are before their senates. The University of Manchester has actually set up such a department. The University College of Nottingham has appointed a director of extra-mural studies, and that at Aberystwyth proposes to do so. The supreme difficulty, however, is the financial one, especially in the case of the newer universities.

It is time that a large portion of the revenues of the universities, and especially of the income derived from ancient endowments, should be devoted to such purposes as these. As everybody knows, at Oxford and Cambridge it is the colleges that are rich, while the university itself is exceedingly poor. But that situation simply demands an internal financial readjustment, and while many colleges have been generous, the necessary advance is in the direction of making financial provision for adult education on the part of the university as a whole not a charity

[1] Final Report, § 333.

but a characteristic function. At the same time, if universities are to perform this truly national service, they undoubtedly will need, and have a right to ask, for larger grants from the Treasury and increased support (particularly in the case of the newer universities, which have not such large endowments and do not ask such high fees from their students) from the rates, through the local education authority, as well as subscriptions and donations from the general public. This the Committee affirms in very definite terms.[1]

(III) Local education authorities now have laid upon them very heavy responsibilities and very far-reaching tasks. Membership of such an authority offers a field of service that may well be coveted by the most public-spirited and best equipped men and women in the community. Only as these offer themselves, and as the electorate sees to it that they are returned and are appointed to the education committee of the urban district, borough, or county council, will it be possible to 'buy up the opportunity,' or to avoid regret concerning the abolition in 1902 of separate 'school boards' for each area. Democracy has education in its own hands. 'It is imperative that Local Education Authorities should take a large and important place in the development of adult education. The increasing co-operation of Local Authorities is a vital need, and non-vocational adult education should be regarded as an integral part of their activities.'[2] The official interpretation of the 1918 Act encourages local education authorities to include provision for adult education in their draft schemes, but the Adult Education Committee desires to see the matter pressed much further, and therefore recommends that 'each Local Education Authority in Great Britain should be required to submit to the appropriate Central Department (i.e. the Board of Education, its Department for Wales, or the Scottish Education Department) a separate scheme or schemes dealing with the provision of facilities for non-vocational adult education.'[2] Draft schemes are being published

[1] Final Report, § 333. [2] Ibid., § 334.

all over the country as these pages are being written. Now is the time for members of urban district, borough, or county councils, and citizens of these communities, to be watchful, to press for the inclusion of such provision, and to secure the support of local opinion for it. Once these schemes are approved, they will determine the policy and programme of local education authorities for some years to come.

The Report commends the establishment of 'non-vocational institutes as evening centres for humane studies' on the lines described in a previous chapter. It urges co-operation with voluntary bodies in this connexion, suggests that 'social and recreational activities should be a prominent feature, and music, drama, dance, and handicrafts should be an integral part of the programme of the institutes,' and dwells upon the importance of forming students' societies and bringing these into participation in the educational work of the institute. In the light of what has been said above regarding the 'young adult,' it is interesting to note the further statement of the Adult Education Committee that 'These institutes, we think, will prove to be the means of satisfying the needs of the young adults—that is to say, of young men and women between the ages of eighteen and about twenty-one.'[1] It is recommended also that the 'local colleges' foreshadowed by the Board of Education should be carried on in close co-operation with voluntary organizations, and that 'the humane studies provided at a local college should be the outcome of a demand formulated and organized by a body or bodies in close touch with possible students.'

Rates are rising—but we cannot afford to 'keep them down' at the cost of being a badly educated nation. It is essential that local education authorities should give 'substantial assistance' to university tutorial classes, to courses of extension lectures, and to the salaries and expenses of resident tutors, while their scholarship schemes should be extended to adults, and they should

[1] Final Report, § 334.

also 'consider the desirability of contributing annually the proceeds of a penny rate to the provincial universities with which they are most closely associated.' Sir Henry Jones has for a long time past worked unsparingly to bring about a penny rate for universities in Wales, and the idea is being taken up, we hope successfully, in some parts of England.

Perhaps the most important recommendation regarding local authorities is that they 'should where practicable combine to establish within the area they jointly cover an Adult Education Joint Committee. This Committee should be required to co-opt representatives of universities and of bodies engaged in organizing non-vocational classes aided out of public funds. The Joint Committee would receive applications for the provision of adult classes, and would form a panel of suitable lecturers from which teachers could be chosen for the classes provided.' [1]

The aim of such an organization would be to avoid overlapping, to make sure that existing needs were not overlooked, and to combine security of public control over public funds with the freedom of organization indispensable in adult non-vocational education. Such a Joint Committee would not interfere with the functions of any voluntary body represented on it, but should prove an effective means of co-ordination and mutual stimulus. 'We have suggested that each Local Authority should be required to submit separate schemes for the non-vocational adult education provided in its area. Classes arranged by an Adult Education Authority would consequently form part of such schemes and a block grant be payable by the Central Authority. If a Local Education Authority agreed to allow a Joint Committee to provide the whole of its non-vocational facilities for adults, then the latter might receive the block grant made by the State.' [2] The principle has been applied with great success in the case of the joint committees set up by the universities and the voluntary bodies organizing university tutorial classes. The Committee is anxious to see an extension of it to

[1] Final Report, § 334.

[2] Ibid., § 321.

non-university provision for adult education. Already some local authorities are acting upon it in connexion with the provision that they are asking voluntary organizations to undertake under the famous 'clause 17' of the Fisher Act—the clause requiring social and recreational facilities as part of the continuation school programme. In some places, such as Bradford, the local authority has called together representatives of voluntary bodies for the purpose of comparing notes on their respective arrangements for adult education, and has issued a joint programme of lectures, classes, and similar activities for the season. This spontaneous development is evidence that the more thorough-going plan proposed by the Adult Education Committee is both feasible and desirable.

This is a step which can be taken at once—the County Education Committee for Cornwall has already set up such a Joint Adult Education Committee—and it is plainly one that will be of the greatest importance. Even if it is not made a statutory obligation upon the local education authority, many directors of education and chairmen of education committees would welcome the idea, while it cannot be anything but an advance from the point of view of any well-advised voluntary organization.

(IV) As to the part to be played by the State, it may appear to the casual reader that the Master of Balliol's Committee has simply taken up the refrain of Kipling's 'Absent-Minded Beggar'—'Pay! Pay!! Pay!!!' But that is far from being the whole truth. It is certain that adult non-vocational education, especially among working people, is never likely to pay for itself in the strictly financial sense. The students should, and gladly do, make such payments as are possible to them. Wealthy friends of adult education are rendering magnificent help, and doing so through channels which effectually prevent any possibility of 'capitalist domination,' which might otherwise be suspected, in the present condition of our social life. Universities and local education authorities are doing a great deal—can and must do more. But when all is reckoned, you cannot have a

soundly based, continuous, adequate, and democratic system without help from the State on a scale which as yet has hardly even been contemplated. 'The general tradition of this country, at least so far as adult education is concerned, is that the State should aid education, but that it should leave wide powers of self-organization to those whom it aids. This tradition, though it does not make for administrative symmetry, we believe to be sound.'[1] But the Committee, in enunciating this principle, is not blind to the duty of the State respecting funds thus distributed. 'The safeguards upon which the State should rely to ensure that public money is well spent,' it adds, 'are :—

'(1) The fulfilment of certain conditions as to regularity of attendance and work, etc., and
'(2) Inspection to satisfy itself by direct evidence that the educational work done is on a level which entitles it to public support.'

The issue of this is plain, and is stated as follows :—

'The State should not refuse financial support to institutions, colleges, and classes merely on the ground that they have a particular "atmosphere" or appeal specially to students of a particular type. All that it ought to ask is that they be concerned with serious study.'[1]

And in the body of the Report the Committee proceeds boldly to argue thus :—

'It is said in criticism of this view that the adult educational work of sectarian bodies ought not to be subsidized out of public funds. We do not agree; in our judgement, whether the State ought to help such education depends upon the quality of the work and not upon the institution which conducts it. The basis of

[1] Final Report, § 336.

discrimination between education and propaganda is not the particular opinions held by the teacher or the students, but the intellectual competence and quality of the former and the seriousness and continuity of study of the latter. Any other standard puts the State in a position of censorship which it ought not to be expected to take. It would inevitably give rise to a differentiation between the knowledge which in the opinion of the State it is desirable to disseminate and knowledge the diffusion of which should not be encouraged. The State could, indeed, hardly avoid the charge of "manufacturing public opinion." In our view, the only sound principle is that the State should be willing to help all serious educational work, including the educational work of institutions and organizations which are recruited predominantly from students with, say, a particular religious or political philosophy.' [1]

In a subsequent paragraph the Committee points out that 'Education is its own safeguard,' and that the real peril confronting the nation is 'not too much study by students with a sectarian bias, but too little study of any kind. The real danger to the national welfare is not from students pursuing their studies animated with a particular view of things, but rather from the far larger number of those who pursue no intellectual interests and have made no efforts to equip themselves for the duties of citizenship and the organized activities of the community.' [2]

The significance and the weight of quotations which it seemed important to make at such length rest upon two considerations—the extraordinary variety of temperaments, opinions, traditions, and experience represented upon the Adult Education Committee, and the complete unanimity with which all its findings were reached.

The interaction of the four elements—the voluntary bodies, the universities, the local education authorities,

[1] Final Report, § 215. [2] Ibid., § 216.

and the State—on the lines proposed, is essential if we are to have an educated nation. Such co-operation cannot be achieved apart from certain conditions, with which the next chapter will deal. But if it is attained it affords a complete safeguard for every interest involved, brings under contribution all the available resources of men, money, and organization, and fulfils the ideal of an ordered democracy in the field of adult education.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SPIRIT OF ADULT EDUCATION

WHEN, in the recent war, we were fighting for the life of the best things in the world, we did not count the cost. We spent eight millions a day, if not cheerfully, at least ungrudgingly. Also, we became (from certain points of view!) a disciplined nation. All of us were ready to be organized, officially or voluntarily, that we might use our resources and our capacities exactly where these were most needed. But all the while we were aware that neither wealth, nor man-power, nor organization, nor all three together, were enough. It was spirit that mattered. People would not have given their money, they would never have submitted to the drill-sergeant and to 'Dora,' and most certainly they would not have yielded their own lives, or lives that they valued far more than their own, had it not been for that great community of thought and purpose which, for lack of a better term, we call public spirit.

It will be evident that the great enterprise of adult education, which is a campaign for the cultivation and the sharing of all the best things in the world, demands money, men, and organization on a scale which it takes some courage to face. As to the money required, it may suffice to remark that we ought to compare this, not with the miserable little mound of farthings that we have been accustomed to spend upon adult education, but with the heaped-up millions of pounds blown into the

air or sunk in the sea during the four years of war. Respecting the need of men—and women—we shall have to give our best to this business, as we sent the flower of our young men and women to the trenches, the hospitals, and the munition factories then. The demand is overwhelming. On all hands the establishment of continuation schools is retarded for lack of teachers: the universities have double the number of undergraduates they had before the war, and at the same time terribly depleted tutorial staffs: the Adult Education Report is at great pains to show how urgent a matter the supply and training of teachers for tutorial classes and study circles has now become. In each of the three fields it is not a mere matter of numbers, but a question of quality: the very best are needed alike for continuation schools, intramural university work, and adult education. Then comes the problem of organization, and however clearly you may map out the proper relations of the four 'high contracting parties' described in the last chapter, however happily you may show the distinct and complementary functions of each, when you come down to details the adjustment of claims and activities as between these four may well prove the hardest task of all. It will be impossible even to come within sight of achieving the splendid aim set before us by the Adult Education Committee, or even to hope that we may become an educated nation, unless there is a great calling forth of public spirit. This, in turn, rests upon a recognition of the true spirit of adult education.

When a Government committee, dealing with a mass of hard facts and required to make business-like recommendations on the practical aspects of the subject, describes education as 'a spiritual activity,' it is worth while to inquire somewhat closely into the phrase. True education is the development of the whole personality. That end can be attained only by one means—contact and mutual reaction between it and other personalities. Books worth calling books at all are but the self-expression of living minds. Lectures are the same. The importance of discussion in adult education

is just that it produces this vital reciprocal influence of personalities. The process involves the sinking of prejudice and the doing away of all suspicion. The educated man is he who can listen receptively to unfamiliar facts or unwelcome truths, who can face with equanimity extreme or exaggerated statements and points of view for the sake of drawing out and adding to the common stock the measure of truth that these may prove to contain, and who wins a way for his own opinions by his toleration of differing or opposed ones. The nation that desires to be educated must be willing to take that path. But this is where the difficulty lies. We group ourselves according to our social position and outlook, our political sympathies, our religious convictions, our official responsibilities, and our democratic instincts. Without this variety life would be dull indeed, and the worlds of thought and action would be robbed of their vitality and richness. Within the republic of education, however, differences may be invaluable, but discords are fatal.

To take an illustration, and incidentally an example, from widely prevailing types of social theory. If a man is a socialist, of whatever school, he is apt to feel himself diametrically opposed in nearly everything to the individualist. It would appear that between them there is a great gulf fixed, and that they must find themselves perpetually kept apart in ideals, aims, and methods. Yet the synthesis of individualism and socialism is the setting of the complete man amidst the ideal society. On its 'practical' side the problem is one for economics and politics to solve. Neither will succeed unless the two have been brought together and transcended in the higher spheres of education and religion. The tendency in all human society is that when one well-marked school of thought has held sway for a considerable time, a reaction sets in, a completely opposed school arises, and its disciples organize themselves into a 'movement' which in time becomes as powerful, and as prejudiced, as that which it has displaced. But if education is to be worth anything it must be paramount over even the organization that fosters it.

The reaction from dilettantism in the universities was utilitarianism in some of the earlier forms of adult education. As our system of local government has developed in its range and complexity, there has grown up an increasing suspicion of 'officialdom.' One issue of the closer application of adult education to the current needs and interests of working people is the danger that class-war may be carried into education. The dogmatic abuse of authority by the Church in centuries when she had forgotten her own earlier tradition as a pioneer of truth has encouraged an equally dogmatic insistence that the State cannot be free unless it is secular.

Of these things we must rid ourselves, and speedily. It is as foolish to accuse the universities of deliberately, or even unwittingly, giving a 'capitalist bias' to their teaching as it is to suggest that the working class educational movements approve of a 'trade union education.' The word 'control' is being much exploited at the present time, with the alleged intention of protecting adult education among working class people both from undue interference on the part of officialdom in the form of the Board of Education and the local education authority, and from undue influence on the part of capitalism through the universities or wealthy subscribers to the funds of voluntary bodies. Democratic control is unquestionably vital to adult education. But democracy is as wide as the community—or should be so. It is necessary that everybody should see, as clearly as those who make such a point of 'working class control in education,' that if the adult education movement is to take real hold of the working class, they must have the *right* kind of class-consciousness in the matter—regarding it as their own activity, conducted with their special needs and interests in view, paid for very largely by themselves (whether directly, or through rates and taxes). If, however, the *wrong* sort of class-consciousness is developed, you get the worst possible reaction to the kind of spirit that may at one time have prevailed in the universities, though it does not now. You

have mob-government in education offered because snob-government was once suffered. Democracy is an inclusive, not an exclusive, term. Applied to adult education it surely means that everyone directly concerned in a given piece of educational work should be consulted about the conduct of it, and implies that the more varieties of opinion and experience you get in your group, the richer and stronger will be the result, provided you allow them all to have free play. Public spirit will prevent either chaos or controversy in the bad sense.

A certain type of voluntary worker tends to nurture a lingering suspicion of all official bodies, simply because they are official. This must be deliberately and finally renounced. Let us admit that some local authorities are philistine, or wooden, or apathetic, or autocratic: that some Board of Education regulations are narrow, and some officials cold and unimaginative. In both instances the exact opposite is true in the majority of cases. No group of men in the country will be found more sympathetic than the directors of education and secretaries of education committees under local education authorities. The schemes under the Fisher Act already drafted by them and approved by their committees show for the most part a very real humaneness. A like sympathy is to be found at the Board of Education by those who know where and how to look for it. But if there are bad local education authorities, who is responsible? Surely they are democratically elected, and it is the first business of those who demand democratic control in education to ensure it by electing the right people to all local governing bodies. And if Whitehall must have rules, it also has reports and recommendations from wise and well-informed inspectors; in its dealing with university tutorial classes it has shown singular sympathy and generosity, which it will no doubt extend to the movement for adult non-vocational education in its many other aspects, as the Adult Education Committee's Report suggests that it should.

e other hand, any narrowness or nervousness on

the part of official bodies is as unreasoning and deplorable as the antagonistic attitude assumed by certain voluntary workers. It cannot too often be urged that you must trust the people, even when they seem one-sided or wrong-headed, so long as they are serious of purpose and honest in heart: you must, above all, trust the power of education to prevail over the processes by which it is sometimes sought. In fact, the spirit which pervades the individual class or study group where anything approaching a sound piece of work (from whatever angle) is being done is essential to the whole movement and to all who are concerned with it, officially or otherwise, throughout the country. The whole strength and wisdom of the nation are needed for the carrying out of this task of adult education. We cannot afford to waste anything on suspicions and controversies. To exclude any who really are seeking truth and a larger life for the whole community, by whatever path they come to the quest, and however narrow a vision of that quest they may have at the outset, is a betrayal of both truth and humanity. In adult education, classes and creeds and caucuses must meet and mingle in such simplicity and honesty of common purpose that it is possible for them to discover how many facets there are to the one great jewel of Truth—how many rays make up white light—by how many gates men go in to the city of God.

The effective education of a people has its corollary and completion in nothing less than international education. Till the nations of the world know and appreciate the genius of one another, not only in politics and commerce, but in art, music, letters, philosophy, and religion, the dreams of a League of Nations will never come true. We British folk have the reputation of being insular, and we manage to live up to it exceedingly well. We study languages for business purposes. We travel in other countries to see the sights or to regain our health. If we are to become an educated nation this must be part of the process—to cultivate citizenship of the world.

The educating of a nation is therefore the task of the

whole nation. The vision is before us. It is for us all to play our respective parts in bringing it to realization

> That mind and soul, according well
> May make one music, as before,
> But vaster.

NOTE ON THE ADULT EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE MINISTRY OF RECONSTRUCTION

THIS committee was appointed in July 1917. The following were the members:—

The Master of Balliol (*Chairman*); Mrs. J. Baker, Sir Graham Balfour, Mr. E. Bevin, Mr. W. Clayton, Mr. R. Climie, Mr. C. T. Cramp, Mrs. T. Huws Davies, Mr. J. H. Doncaster, Mr. R. G. Hatton, Mr. F. Hodges, Sir Henry Jones, Mr. A. Mansbridge, Sir Henry Miers, Mr. J. Morton, The Rev. Canon Parry, Mr. R. H. Tawney, Mr. T. H. J. Underdown, the Rev. Basil A. Yeaxlee; Mr. Arthur Greenwood, Mr. E. S. Cartwright (*Secretaries*).

It will be seen that trade unions, manufacturers, teachers, universities, local education authorities, and all varieties of voluntary bodies concerned with adult education, such as the Workers' Educational Association, the Central Labour College, the Co-operative Union Central Study Committee, the Adult Schools, and the Y.M.C.A., were represented.

The Committee presented three interim reports—the first, on Industrial and Social Conditions in Relation to Adult Education (Cd. 9107), was issued in March 1918; the second, on Education in the Army (Cd. 9225), completed in July 1918, and was issued in the autumn of that year; the third was on Libraries and Museums (Cd. 9237), and this was issued in May 1919.

The Committee's Final Report (Cmd. 321) was issued in September 1919.

All the Reports were unanimously signed. Mr. Bevin was unable to attend any of the meetings of the committee, and therefore did not sign the reports.

FOR FURTHER READING

REFERENCES to the most important books have already been given in the footnotes to the text. The following publications will also be found useful :—

The Education of the Citizen. Arthur Greenwood. Workers' Educational Association, 1920. 6*d.* net. (A brief summary of the Reports of the Adult Education Committee, by the secretary.)

Cambridge Essays on Adult Education. Edited by R. St. John Parry, Vice-Master of Trinity, and a member of the Adult Education Committee. Cambridge University Press, 1920. 12*s.* 6*d.* net.

University Tutorial Classes, a Study in the Development of Higher Education among Working Men and Women. Albert E. Mansbridge. Longmans, Green & Co., 1913. 2*s.* 6*d.* net.

The Workers and Education, a Record of Some Present-Day Experiments. F. J. Gillman. Allen and Unwin, 1916. 1*s.* net. (Chiefly concerned with the work of non-residential settlements, guest-houses, week-end schools, etc.)

Education through Settlements. Arnold Freeman. Allen and Unwin, 1919. 1*s.* 6*d.* net.

Toynbee Hall and the Settlement Movement. Werner Pight. Bell, 1916. 2*s.* 6*d.* (Useful descriptive list and bibliography.)

W.E.A. Year Book of Education. Workers' Educational Association, 1918. 3*s.* 6*d.* (The best general handbook of general information, facts, and figures about adult education.)

Bulletin of the World Association for Adult Education. Issued quarterly to all subscribers of the minimum sum of 6*s.* annually to the World Association (13 John Street, Adelphi, W.C.2). Each issue is complete in itself, and takes the form of a valuable review of adult education in one country, with a few notes on current events in educational progress.

The most useful periodical devoted wholly to adult education is the monthly journal of the W.E.A., *The Highway*, price 2*d.* *The Times Educational Supplement*, 2*d.* weekly, *Journal of Education*, 6*d.* monthly (Macmillan), and some other educational journals have frequent articles on the subject. The quarterly reviews should also be watched for contributions by authoritative writers.

Reports, pamphlets, and other literature should be obtained from such organizations as the following, for in them will be found the latest news and details of the adult education movement in its various phases: the Workers' Educational Association, 16 Harpur Street, Theobald's Road, W.C.1; the National Adult School Union, 30 Bloomsbury Street, W.C.1; the Co-operative

Union Central Study Committee, Holyoake House, Manchester; the National Home Reading Union, 12 York Buildings, Adelphi, W.C.2; the Y.M.C.A. Universities Committee, 13 Russell Square, W.C.1; the Y.W.C.A. National Headquarters, George Street, Hanover Square, W.; the Educational Settlements Association, 30 Bloomsbury Street, W.C.1; Ruskin College, Oxford; the Labour College, 13 Penywern Road, S.W.5; and, of course, the extension boards or extra-mural departments of the various universities.

All official publications of the Board of Education are to be obtained from H.M. Stationery Office, Kingsway, W.C.2.

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